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THE

HISTORY OF FICTION.

HISTORY OF FICTION:

BEING

A CRITICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE MOST CELEBRATED

PROSE WORKS OF FICTION,

FROM THE EARLIEST GREEK ROMANCES TO THE
NOVELS OF THE PRESENT AGE.

By JOHN DUNLOP.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE art of fictitious narrative appears to have its origin in the same principles of selection by which the fine arts in general are created and perfected. Among the vast variety of trees and shrubs which are presented to his view, a savage finds, in his wanderings, some which peculiarly attract his notice by their beauty and fragrance, and these he at length selects and plants them round his dwelling. In like manner, among the mixed events of human life, he experiences some which are peculiarly grateful, and of which the narrative at once pleases himself, and excites in the minds of his hearers a kindred emotion. Of this kind are unlooked-for oc-

currences, successful enterprise, or great and unexpected deliverance from signal danger and distress. As he collected round his habitation those objects with which he had been pleased, in order that they might afford him a frequent gratification, so he rests his fancy on those incidents which had formerly awakened the most powerful emotions; and the remembrance of which most strongly excites his tenderness, or pride, or gratitude.

Thus, in process of time, a mass of curious narrative is collected, which is communicated from one individual to another. In almost every occurrence of human life, however, as in almost every scene of nature, something intervenes of a mixed, or indifferent, description, tending to weaken the agreeable emotion, which, without it, would be more pure and forcible. For example,—in the process of forming the garden, the savage finds that it is not enough merely to collect a variety of agreeable trees or plants; he discovers that more than this is necessary, and that it is also

essential that he should grub up from around his dwelling the shrubs which are useless or noxious, and which weaken or impair the pure delight which he derives from others. He is careful, accordingly, that the rose should no longer be placed beside the thistle, as in the wild, but that it should flourish in a clear, and sheltered, and romantic situation, where its sweets may be undiminished, and where its form can be contemplated without any attending circumstances of uneasiness or disgust. The collector of agreeable facts finds, in like manner, that the sympathy which they excite can be heightened by removing from their detail every thing that is not interesting, or which tends to weaken the principal emotion, which it is his intention to raise. He renders, in this way, the occurrences more unexpected, the enterprises more successful, the deliverance from danger and distress more wonderful. "As the active world," says Lord Bacon, "is inferior to the rational soul, so *Fiction* gives to mankind what his-

tory denies, and, in some measure, satisfies the mind with shadows when it cannot enjoy the substance : For, upon a narrow inspection, *Fiction* strongly shows that a greater variety of things, a more perfect order, a more beautiful variety, than can any where be found in nature, is pleasing to the mind. And as real history gives us not the success of things according to the deserts of vice and virtue, *Fiction* corrects it, and presents us with the fates and fortunes of persons rewarded or punished according to merit. And as real history disgusts us with a familiar and constant similitude of things, *Fiction* relieves us by unexpected turns and changes, and thus not only delights, but inculcates morality and nobleness of soul. It raises the mind by accommodating the images of things to our desires, and, not like history and reason, subjecting the mind to things.”¹

From this view of the subject, it is obvious

¹ De Aug. Scient. lib. II. p. 13.

that the fictions framed by mankind, or the narratives with which they are delighted, will vary with their feelings, and with the state of society. Since Fiction may be regarded as select and highly coloured history, those adventures would naturally form the basis of it which had already come to pass, or which were most likely to occur. Accordingly, in a warlike age, it would be peculiarly employed in tales of enterprise and chivalry, and, in times of gallantry, in the detail of love adventures.

The History of Fiction, therefore, becomes, in a considerable degree, interesting to the philosopher, and occupies an important place in the history of the progress of society. By contemplating the fables of a people, we have a successive delineation of their prevalent modes of thinking, a picture of their feelings and tastes and habits. In this respect prose fiction appears to possess advantages considerably superior either to history or poetry. In history there is too little individu-

ality; in poetry too much effort to permit the poet and historian to pourtray the manners living as they rise. History treats of man, as it were, in the mass, and the individuals whom it paints are regarded merely, or principally, in a public light, without taking into consideration their private feelings, tastes, or habits. Poetry is in general capable of too little detail, while its paintings, at the same time, are usually too much forced and exaggerated. But in Fiction we can discriminate without impropriety, and enter into detail without meanness. Hence it has been remarked, that it is chiefly in the fictions of an age that we can discover the modes of living, dress, and manners of the period. "Finally," says Borromeo, (in the preface to the *Notizia de Novellieri Italiani*,) "we should remark the light that novels spread on the history of the times. He who doubts of this may read the *Eulogium of Bandello*, and he will be satisfied that his *Novelliero* may be regarded as a magic mirror, which distinctly reflects the

customs and manners of the sixteenth century, an age fertile in great events ; and it also acquaints us with many literary and political anecdotes, which the historians of the revolutions of our states have not transmitted to posterity. I, myself, can affirm that in these tales I have found recorded authentic anecdotes of the private lives of sovereigns, that would in vain be sought for in ordinary histories."

But even if the utility which is derived from Fiction were less than it is, how much are we indebted to it for pleasure and enjoyment ! It sweetens solitude and charms sorrow—it occupies the attention of the vacant, and unbends the mind of the philosopher. Like the enchanter, Fiction shows us, as it were, in a mirror, the most agreeable objects ; recalls from a distance the forms which are dear to us, and soothes our own griefs by awakening our sympathy for others. By its means the recluse is placed in the midst of society ; and he who is harassed and agitated in the city is

transported to rural tranquillity and repose. The rude are refined by an introduction, as it were, to the higher orders of mankind, and even the dissipated and selfish are, in some degree, corrected by those paintings of virtue and simple nature, which must ever be employed by the novelist if he wish to awaken emotion or delight.

And such seems now to be the common idea which is entertained of the value of Fiction. Accordingly, this powerful instrument of virtue and happiness, after having been long despised, on account of the purposes to which it had been made subservient, has gradually become more justly appreciated, and more highly valued. Works of Fiction have been produced, abounding at once with the most interesting details, and the most sagacious reflections, and which differ from treatises of abstract philosophy only by the greater justness of their views, and the higher interest which they excite. And it may be presumed, that a path, at once so useful and delightful,

will continue to be trod : It may be presumed, that virtue and vice, the conduct of human life, what we are expected to feel, and what we are called on to do and to suffer, will long be taught by example, a method which seems better fitted to improve the mind than abstract propositions and dry discussion.

Entertaining such views of the nature and utility of fiction, and indebted to its charms for some solace and enjoyment, I have employed a few hours of relaxation in drawing up the following notices of its gradual progress. No works are perhaps more useful or agreeable, than those which delineate the advance of the human mind—the history of what different individuals have effected in the course of ages, for the instruction, or even the innocent amusement, of their species. Such a delineation is attended with innumerable advantages : It furnishes a collection of interesting facts concerning the philosophy of mind, which we thus study not in an abstract and introspective method, but in a manner certain and

experimental. It retrieves from oblivion a number of individuals, whose now obsolete works are perhaps in detail unworthy of public attention, but which promoted and diffused in their own day, light and pleasure, and form as it were landmarks which testify the course and progress of genius. By contemplating also not only what has been done, but the mode in which it has been achieved, a method may perhaps be discovered of proceeding still farther, of avoiding the errors into which our predecessors have fallen, and of following the paths in which they have met success. Retrospective works of this nature, therefore, combine utility, justice, and pleasure; and accordingly, in different branches of philosophy and literature, various histories of their progress and fortunes have appeared.

I have attempted in the following work to afford such a delineation as I have now alluded to, of the origin and progress of fiction, of the various forms which it has successively assumed, and the different authors by whom

it has been most successfully cultivated and promoted. No writer, as far as I am aware, has hitherto presented a full and continued view of this subject, though detached parts of it have been separately treated with much learning and ingenuity.

Huet, who was the first who investigated this matter, has given us a treatise, formally entitled *de Origine Fabularum*. That part of his essay which relates to the Greek romances, though very succinct, is sufficiently clear, and stored with sound criticism. But having brought down the account of fiction to the later Greeks, and just entered on those composed by the western nations, which have now the name of Romances almost appropriated to them, "he puts the change on his readers," as Warburton has remarked, (*Notes to Love's Labour's Lost*), "and instead of giving us an account of the Tales of Chivalry, one of the most curious and interesting parts of the subject of which he promised to treat, he contents himself with an account of the poems

of the Provençal writers, called likewise romances; and so, under the equivocal of a common term, he drops his proper subject, and entertains us with another which had no relation to it except in the name."

Subsequent to the publication of this treatise by Huet, several works were projected in France, with the design of exhibiting a general view of fictitious composition. The first was the *Bibliothèque des Romans*, by the Abbé Lenglet Dufresnoy, in two volumes, published in 1735, under the name of Gordon de Perceval. It is a mere catalogue, however, and wants accuracy, the only quality which can render a catalogue valuable.

In 1775, a work, also entitled *Bibliothèque des Romans*, was commenced on a much more extensive plan, and was intended to comprise an analysis of the chief works of fiction from the earliest times. The design was conceived and traced by the Marquis de Paulmy, whose extensive library supplied the contributors with the materials from which their abstracts were

drawn. The conductor was M. de Bastide, one of the feeble imitators of the younger Crebillon. He supplied, however, few articles, but enjoyed as cooperators, the Chevalier de Mayer, and M. de Cardonne; as also the Comte de Tressan, whose contributions have been likewise published in the collection of his own works, under the title *Corps d'Extraits*.

In the *Bibliothèque des Romans*, prose works of fiction are divided into classes, and a summary of one romance from each order is exhibited in turn. This compilation was published periodically till the year 1787, and four volumes were annually given to the world.

Next to the enormous length, and the frequent selection of worthless materials, the principal objection to the work is the arrangement adopted by the editors. Thus, a romance of chivalry intervenes between two Greek romances, or is presented alternately with a French heroic romance, or modern no-

vel. Hence the reader is not furnished with a view of the progress of Fiction in continuity; he cannot trace the imitations of successive fablers, nor the way in which fiction has been modified by the manners of an age. There is besides little or no criticism of the novels or romances which are analyzed, and the whole work seems to have been written under the eye of the sultan who said he would cut off the head of the first man who made a reflection. But even the utility of the abstracts, which should have been the principal object of the work, is in a great measure lost, as it appears to have been the intention of the editors rather to present an entertaining story, somewhat resembling that of the original, than a faithful analysis. Characters and sentiments are thus exhibited, incongruous with ancient romance, and abhorrent from the opinions of the era whose manners it reflects. It is only as presenting a true and lively picture of the age, that romance has claims on the attention of the antiquarian and

philosopher ; and if its genuine remains be adulterated with a mixture of sentiments and manners of modern growth, the composition is heterogeneous and uninstrusive. (Rose's *Amadis de Gaul.*)

Abstracts of romances omitted in the *Bibliothèque des Romans*, have been published in *Mélanges tirés d'une Grande Bibliothèque*, which is a selection from the scarce manuscripts and publications contained in the library of the Marquis de Paulmy. The work has also been continued in the *Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Romans*, which comprises abridgments of the most recent productions of the French, English, and German novelists.

In this country there has been no attempt towards a general History of Fiction. Dr Percy, Warton, and others, have written, as is well known, with much learning and ingenuity, on that branch of the subject which relates to the origin of *Romantic Fiction*—the marvellous decorations of chivalry. This enquiry, however, comprehends but a small part

of the subject, and even here research has often been directed to the establishment of a theory, than to the investigation of truth.

In the following work I shall try to present a faithful analysis of those early and scarce productions which form, as it were, the land-marks of Fiction. Select passages will occasionally be added, and I shall endeavour by criticisms to give such a sketch as may enable the reader to form some idea of the nature and merit of the works themselves, and of the transmission of fable from one age and country to another.

HISTORY OF FICTION, &c.

A

HISTORY OF FICTION, &c.

CHAPTER I.

Origin of fictitious Narrative.—Earliest Writers of Greek Romance.—Heliodorus.—Achilles Tatius.—Longus.—Chariton.—Joannes Damascenus.—Eustathius.—Remarks on this Species of Composition.

THE nature and utility of fiction having been pointed out, and the design of the work explained in the introductory remarks, it now only remains to prosecute what forms the proper object of this undertaking,—the Origin and Progress of Fable, and the Analysis and Criticism of the Prosaic Fictions, which have been successively presented to the world.

We have already seen that fiction has in all ages formed the delight of the rudest and the most polished nations. The taste, however, for this species of narrative, or composition, seems to have been most early and most generally prevalent in Persia, and other Asiatic regions, where the nature of the climate and the luxury of the inhabitants conspired to promote its cultivation.

The people of Asia Minor, who possessed the fairest portion of the globe, were addicted to every species of luxury and magnificence ; and having fallen under the dominion of the Persians, imbibed with the utmost avidity the amusing fables of their conquerors. The Milesians, who were a colony of Greeks, and spoke the Ionic dialect, excelled all the neighbouring nations in ingenuity, and first caught from the Persians this rage for fiction. The tales they invented, and of which the name has become so celebrated, have all perished. There is little known of them, except that they were not of a very moral tendency, and were principally written by a person of the name of Aristidis, whose stories were translated into Latin by Sisenna, the Roman historian, about the time of the civil wars of Marius and Sylla.

But though the Milesian tales have perished, of their nature some idea may be formed from the sto-

ries of Parthenius Nicenus;¹ many of which, there is reason to believe, are extracted from these ancient fables, or at least are written in the same spirit. The tales of Nicenus are about forty in number, but appear to be mere sketches. They chiefly consist of accounts of every species of seduction, and the criminal passions of the nearest relations. The principal characters generally come to some deplorable end, though seldom proportioned to what they merited from their vices. Nicenus seems to have engrafted the Milesian tales on the mythological fables of Apollodorus and similar writers; and also to have borrowed from early historians and poets, whose productions have not descended to us. The work is inscribed to Cornelius Gallus, the Latin poet, the contemporary and friend of Virgil.² Indeed, the author says that it was composed for his use, to furnish him with materials for elegies and other poems.

The people of Asia Minor, and especially the Milesians, had a considerable intercourse with the Greeks of Attica and Peloponnesus. The genius of the inhabitants of these latter countries also, naturally disposed them to fiction. They were delighted

¹ Παρθένιος Νικένως περί βρωτικῶν παθημάτων.

² Eclog. 10.

with the tales of the eastern nations, and pleasure produced imitation.

Previous, however, to the age of Alexander, little seems to have been attempted in this way by the European Greeks; but the more frequent intercourse which his conquests introduced between the Greek and Asiatic nations, opened at once all the sources of fiction. Clearchus, who was a disciple of Aristotle, and who wrote a history of fictitious love adventures, seems to have been the first person who gained any celebrity by this species of composition.

Some years afterwards Antonius Diogenes wrote a more perfect romance than had hitherto appeared, founded on the wanderings, adventures, and loves of Dinias and Dercyllis, entitled, *Of the incredible Things in Thule*.¹ The notion of the work is said to have been taken from the *Odyssey*, and in fact many of the incidents seem borrowed from that poem. Indeed, the author mentions a number of writers prior to himself, particularly Antiphanis, from whom he had collected these adventures. The work of Diogenes, though filled with the most trifling and improbable narrations, is worthy of attention, as it seems to have been a repo-

¹ Ἀντίωνος Διογενέως τῶν ὑπὲρ Θούλης ἀπίστευτον λόγους.

story from which Achilles Tatius and succeeding fablers derived the materials of less defective romances.

Dinias flying from Arcadia, his native country, arrives at the mouth of the river Tanais. "Urged by the intensity of the cold, he proceeds towards the east; and having made a circuit round the globe, arrives at Thule. Here he forms an acquaintance with Dercyllis, the heroine of the romance, who had been driven from Tyre along with her brother Mantinia, by the intrigues of Paapis, an Egyptian priest. She relates to Dinias how she had wandered through Rhodes and Crete, and also among the Cimmerians, where she had a view of the infernal regions, through favour of her deceased servant Myrto;—how, being separated from her brother, she arrived with a person of the name of Ceryllus at the tomb of the Syrens, and afterwards at a city in Spain, where the people saw during the night, a privilege which was neutralized by total blindness during day.—Dercyllis farther relates how she travelled among the Celts, and a nation of Amazons; and that in Sicily she again met with her brother Mantinia, who related to her adventures still more extraordinary than her own; for this person had seen all the sights in the sun, moon, and most remote islands of the globe. Dercyllis, after many other

vicissitudes, arrived in Thule, whither she was followed by her old enemy Enopia, who, by his magic art, made her die every night and come alive again in the morning; an easy kind of punishment, being equivalent to a refreshing nap. The ratio of these tricks is detected by Azulis, who had accompanied Dinias into Thule, and the spells of the powerful magician being through his means broken, Dercyllis and Mantinia return to their native country. After the departure of his friends, Dinias wanders beyond Thule, and advances towards the Pole. In these regions he says the darkness continued sometimes a month, sometimes six months, but at certain places for a whole year; and that the length of the day was proportioned to that of the night. At last, awakening one morning he finds himself at Tyre, where he meets with his old friends Mantinia and Dercyllis, with whom he passes the remainder of his life.

This romance consisted of twenty-four books, in which Dinias was represented as relating his own adventures, and those he had heard from Dercyllis, to Cymba, who had been sent to Tyre by the Arcadians to prevail on him to return to his native country. The account of these adventures are, at the beginning of the romance, described as having been engraved on cypress tablets by one of Cym-

be's attendants; at the request of Dinias they were placed in his tomb after his death, and are feigned to have been discovered by Alexander the Great during the siege of Tyre.¹

After the composition of the *Dinias* and *Dercyllis* of Diogenes, a considerable period seems to have elapsed without the production of any fictitious narrative deserving the appellation of a romance.

Lucius Patrensis and Lucian, who were nearly contemporary, lived during the reign of the emperor Marcus Aurelius: Lucius, collected accounts of magical transformations; Photius remarks that his style is delightful by its perspicuity, purity, and sweetness,² but as his work comprehends a relation of incidents professedly incredible, without any attempt on the part of the author to give them the appearance of reality, it cannot perhaps be properly admitted into the number of romances.

A considerable portion of the *Metamorphoses* of Lucius were transferred by Lucian into his *Ass*, to which he also gave the name of *Lucius*; a work which may perhaps be again mentioned when

¹ Photius *Bibliotheca* Cod. 156, p. 355. ed. 1653. Rothomagi.

² Ἐστὶ δὲ τὴν φράσιν σαφὴς τε καὶ καθαρὸς καὶ φίλος γλυκύτητες.
Photius. *Bib.*

we come to speak of the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius, a longer and more celebrated production of the same species.

About the time when these authors lived, *Jamblichus* wrote his *Babylonica*.¹ The romance itself has been lost, but the epitome given by *Photius* shows that little improvement had been made in this species of composition, during the period which had elapsed since the production of the *Dinias* and *Dercyllis* of *Diogenes*.

Garmus, king of *Babylon*, having fallen in love with *Sinon*, but not being agreeable to the object of his affections, the lady escapes from his power along with her lover *Rhodanes*. The probability of this event having been anticipated, *Damas* and *Saca*, two eunuchs who had been appointed to watch them, (after having their nose and ears cut off, for their negligence in allowing their flight,) are sent out by the king to re-commit them. The romance principally consists of the adventures of the fugitives, and their hair-breadth escapes from these royal messengers. It is related how *Sinon* and *Rhodanes* conceal themselves in a cavern, in which they are besieged by *Damas*; but the eunuch and his forces are routed by a swarm of poisonous bees. By this intervention the lovers escape from the cave,

¹ *Ἰαμβλίκου Βαβυλωνίων, λθ.*

but having partaken of the honey of their deliverers, which was of a noxious quality, they faint by the road, and during this swoon are passed as dead by the forces of Damas. Having at length recovered, they proceed in their flight, and take up their abode with a man who poisons his brother, and afterwards accuses them of the murder; a charge from which they are freed by the accuser laying violent hands on himself. With a singular luck in meeting with good company, they next quarter themselves with a robber. During their stay his habitation is burned by the troops of Damas, but the lovers escape from the eunuch by alleging that they are the spectres of those whom the robber had murdered in his house. Further prosecuting their flight they meet with the funeral of a young girl, who is discovered, when on the point of interment, to be yet alive. The sepulchre being left vacant, Sinon and Rhodanes sleep in it during that night, and are again passed as dead by their Babylonian pursuers; Sinon having made free with the dead clothes, is taken up while attempting to dispose of them, and is sent to Garmus by the magistrate of the district. Her conductor allows her to escape in the vicinity of Babylon, and she again experiences a new series of adventures; rivalling in probability those which have been related. At last

Rhodanes is delivered up to Garmus, and nailed to the cross. While he is in this crisis, and while Garmus is dancing and carousing round the crucifix, a messenger arrives with intelligence that Sinon is about to be married to the king of Syria; Rhodanes is taken down from the cross, and appointed general of a Babylonish army, which is sent against that monarch. This is a striking but deceitful *peripeteia*, as the inferior officers are ordered by Garmus to kill Rhodanes, should he obtain the victory, and to bring Sinon alive to Babylon. The king of Syria is totally defeated, and Rhodanes recovers Sinon, but instead of being slain by the officers of his army, he is chosen king of the Babylonians.¹

The romance, of which this short account has been given, is divided into sixteen books; if we may judge of the original from the epitome transmitted by Photius, the ground-work of the story is well conceived. The close and eager pursuit by the eunuchs gives rise to narrow escapes, which might have been rendered interesting. But the particular adventures are unnatural and ludicrous. The episodes also of Berenice, and of the Temple of Venus, which is situated on an island formed by the con-

¹ Photius Bibliotheca Cod. 94. p. 235. Suidas, &c.

fluence of the Euphrates and Tigris, seem to have been extremely tedious and ill placed. There is besides an unpleasant ferocity in the character of Sinec. The hero and heroine generally escape from their pursuers by passing as defuncts or spirits, which produces a disagreeable sameness in a subject capable of much variety. Indeed, the incidents, though for the most part abundantly ludicrous, are always of a dark and gloomy cast;—a character which by no means appertains to the adventures in the subsequent romances of Heliodorus, Chariton, or Tatius.

Jamblichus has been censured by Huet,¹ chiefly for the inartificial *disposition* of his work. He seems, according to that author, to have entertained a complete dislike to the advice of Horace, with regard to hurrying his readers into the middle of the action;—he never departs from the order of time, and trudges on, according to the era of dates, with all the exactness of a chronologer.

About two centuries elapsed from the death of Jamblichus, till the composition of the Theagenes and Charicles of Heliodorus, Bishop of Tricca, an author who in every particular, but especially in the arrangement of his fable, far excelled his predecessors.

¹ De Orig. Fab.

There are three points to be chiefly considered in a novel or romance, the *Subject*, the *Disposition*, and the *Ornaments*; a classification which may be regarded as comprehending the means of estimating the most material beauties and defects of any fictitious narrative.

The story, or *nuda materia*, of Theagenes and Chariclea,¹ does not possess any peculiar excellence. Of this story the following is a summary.

Persina, queen of Ethiopia, having viewed, during an amorous congress, a statue of Andromeda, gives birth to a daughter of a fair complexion. Fearing that her husband might not think the cause proportioned to the effect, she commits the infant in charge to Sisimithres, an Ethiopian senator, and deposits in his hands a ring and some writings, explaining the circumstances of her birth. The child is named Chariclea, and remains for seven years with her reputed father. At the end of this period he becomes doubtful of her power to preserve her chastity any longer in that country. He therefore determines to carry her along with him, on an embassy, to which he had been appointed to Oroondates, satrap of Egypt. In that country he accidentally meets with Chariclea, priest of Delphos, who was travelling on account of domestic afflictions, and to

¹ Ηλιοδωρον Αιθιοπικων βιβλια δεκα.

him he transfers the care of Chariclea; Charicles brings her to Delphos, and destines her for the wife of his nephew Alcamenus. In order to reconcile her mind to this connection, he delivers her over to Calasiris, an Egyptian priest, who at that period resided at Delphos, and undertook to prepossess her in favour of the young man. About the same time, Theagenes, a Thessalian, and a descendant of Achilles, comes to Delphos, for the performance of some sacred rite: Theagenes and Chariclea having seen each other in the temple, become mutually enamoured. The notion of this interview of Theagenes and Chariclea seems to be taken from the Hero and Leander of Musæus, where the lovers meet in the fane of Venus at Sestos. Places of worship, however, were in those days the usual scene of the first meeting of lovers, as women were at other times much confined and inaccessible to the view of admirers. There too, even in a later period, the most romantic attachments were formed. It was in the chapel of St Clair, at Avignon, that Petrarch first met with Laura; and Boccacolo became enchanted with Mary of Arragon in the church of the Cordeliers, at Naples.

Calasiris, who had been engaged to influence the mind of Chariclea in favour of her intended husband, is warned in a vision by Apollo that he should

return to his own country, and take Theagenes and Chariclea along with him. Henceforth his whole attention is directed to deceive Charicles, and effect his escape from Delphos. Having lighted on some Phœnician merchants, and having informed the lovers of his intention, he bets sail along with them for Sicily, to which country the Phœnician vessel was bound; soon after passing Zæcynthus the ship is attacked by pirates, who carry Calasiris and these under his protection to the coast of Egypt. On the banks of the Nile, Trachinus, the captain of the pirates, prepares a feast to solemnize his nuptials with Chariclea, but Calasiris, with considerable ingenuity, having persuaded Pelorus, the second in command, that Chariclea is enamoured of him, a contest naturally arises between him and Trachinus during the feast; and the other pirates, espousing different sides of the quarrel, are all slain except Pelorus, who is attacked and put to flight by Theagenes. The stratagem of Calasiris, however, is of little avail, except to himself: for immediately after the contest, while Calasiris is sitting on a hill at some distance, Theagenes and Chariclea are seized by a band of Egyptian robbers, who conduct them to an establishment formed on an island in a remote lake. Thyraïs, the captain of the banditti, becomes enamour-

ed of Chariclea, and declares an intention of espousing her. Chariclea pretends that she is the sister of Theagenes, in order that the jealousy of the robber may not be excited, and the safety of her lover endangered. This deception is practised in other parts of the romance, particularly when Arsace becomes enamoured of Theagenes at Memphis. The incident has been also imitated in many of the subsequent Greek romances, particularly in Ismene and Ismenias, who declare themselves to be brother and sister when they meet in a servile condition in the house of Sostratus. This notion was perhaps suggested to the author of Theagenes and Chariclea, by some passages in the Old Testament.—Heliodorus was a bishop, and though he did not arrive at that dignity till after the composition of his romance, he must have found in the course of his studies, that Sarah and Abram passed, and for similar reasons, for brother and sister while in Egypt, and that Isaac and Rebecca imposed on the people of Gerar by the pretence of the same relation.

Chariclea, however, is not long compelled to assume the character of the sister of Theagenes. The colony is speedily destroyed by the forces of the satrap of Egypt, who was excited to this act

of authority by a complaint from Nausicles, a Greek merchant, that the banditti had carried off his mistress. Thyamis, the captain of the robbers, escapes by flight, and Cnemon, a young Athenian, who had been detained in the colony, and with whom Theagenes had formed a friendship during his confinement, sets out in quest of him. Theagenes and Chariclea depart soon after on their way to a certain village, where they had agreed to meet Cnemon, but are intercepted on the road by the satrap's forces. Theagenes is sent as a present to the king of Persia; and Chariclea being falsely claimed by Nausicles as his mistress, is conducted to his house. Here Calasiris had accidentally fixed his abode, since his separation from Theagenes and Chariclea; and was also doing the honours of the house to Cnemon in the landlord's absence. Chariclea being recognised by Calasiris, Nausicles abandons the claim to her he had advanced, and sets sail with Cnemon for Greece, while Calasiris and Chariclea proceed in search of Theagenes. On arriving at Memphis, they find that with his usual good luck he had again fallen into the power of Thyamis, and was besieging that capital along with that robber. A treaty of peace, however, is speedily concluded. Thyamis is discovered to be the son of Calasiris, and is elected high-priest of

Memphis. Arsace, who commanded in that city, in the absence of her husband, falls in love with Theagenes; but, as he perseveres in resisting all her advances, and in maintaining his fidelity to Chariclea, she orders him to be put to the torture; she also commands her nurse, who was the usual confidant of her amours, and instrument of her cruelty, to poison Chariclea; but the cup-bearer having given the nurse the goblet intended for Chariclea, she expires in convulsions. This, however, serves as a pretext to condemn Chariclea as a poisoner, and she is accordingly appointed to be burned. After she had ascended the pile, and the fire had been lighted, she is saved for that day by the miraculous effects of the stone Pantarbe which she wore on her finger, and which warded off the flames from her person. During the ensuing night a messenger arrives from Oroondates, the husband of Arsace, who was at that time carrying on a war against the Ethiopians: he had been informed of the misconduct of his wife, and had dispatched one of his officers to Memphis with orders to bring Theagenes and Chariclea to his camp. Arsace hangs herself; but the lovers are taken prisoners on their way to Oroondates, by the scouts of the Ethiopian army, and are conducted to Hydaspes, who was at this time besieging Oroondates in Syene. The city

having been taken, and Oroondates vanquished in a great battle, Hydaspes returns to his capital, Meroe, where he proposes to sacrifice Theagenes and Chariclea to the sun and moon, the deities of Ethiopia. Previous to this operation, as virgins only could be sacrificed, Chariclea is subjected to a trial of chastity, an unfortunate precedent, as we shall afterwards find. Theagenes, while on the very brink of sacrifice, performs many feats of strength and dexterity. A bull, which was his companion in misfortune, having broken from the altar, Theagenes follows him on horseback, subdues him, and returns on his back.¹ At length when the two lovers are about to be immolated, Chariclea, by means of the ring and fillet which had been attached to her at her birth, and which she had ever since preserved, is discovered to be the daughter of Hydaspes, which is farther confirmed by the testimony of Sisimithris, once her reputed father; and the opportune arrival of Charicles, priest of Delphos, who was wandering through the world in search of Chariclea. After some demur Chariclea obtains her own release and that of Theagenes, is

¹ This exercise, called *Tauromachia*, was intended to inure youth to martial fatigue, and was much practised in Thessaly, the country of Theagenes, whence it was afterwards introduced at Rome.

united to him in marriage, and acknowledged as heiress of the Ethiopian empire.

Such is the abstract of the story of Theagenes and Chariclea. Now the chief excellences of the story, or *nuda materia* of a romance, are Novelty, Probability, and Variety of incident, in each of which views it may be proper to examine this fictitious narrative.

We are incompetent judges of the claims of Heliodorus to originality of invention, as the romances that preceded Theagenes and Chariclea have for the most part perished. Many of the adventures, however, are no doubt taken from Diogenes and Jamblichus; and it is even suspected that the chief incidents of the story have been founded on a tragedy of Sophocles, called the Captives, (*Διχναλίας*) not now extant.*

As to probability of incident, Heliodorus outrages all verisimilitude in different ways; as for example, by the extraordinary interviews which he brings about, and the summary manner in which he disposes of a character which has become supernumerary. When it is convenient for him that two persons should meet, one of them comes to travel in a country where apparently he had nothing to

* Bourdelotii Adimadvers. p. 3. I. Casaub. ad Athen. L. 1. c. 33.

Heliod. about 200 A.D.
 reign of the

do; and when a character becomes superfluous, the author finds no better resource than informing us that he was bit by an asp, or died suddenly in the night. Unexpected events no doubt enliven a narrative; but if they greatly violate the order and course of nature, that belief in an ideal presence, which is essential to relish or interest, is totally overthrown; and the credence of reality being once destroyed, the waking dream cannot again be restored, nor can the reader conceive even the probable incidents as passing before him.

In the romance of Heliodorus also, the changes of Fortune are too frequent and too much of the same nature—all the adventures and distresses in the book originate in the hero or heroine falling into the hands of robbers. This, it is true, gives rise to many romantic incidents, but also to an unvaried and tiresome recurrence of similar misfortunes. In works of art, we wish for that diversity exhibited in the appearances of nature, and require that every step should bring to view some object, or some arrangement, that has not been previously presented.

The work of the Bishop of Tricca, however, has received much embellishment from the *disposition* of the fable, and the artful manner in

which the tale is disclosed. The gradual unfolding of the story of Theagenes and Chariclea, the suspense in which the mind is held, and the subsequent evolution of what seemed intricate, is praised by Tasso, who greatly admired, and was much indebted to Heliodorus; "il lasciar," says he, "*l'auditor sospeso procedendo dal confuso al distinto, dall'universale a' particolari è arte perpetua di Vergilio, e questa è una, dell'ingegni che fa piacer tanto Eliodoro.*"¹ Nor are the incidents arranged in the chronological order of the preceding romances, and of modern novels. The work begins in the middle of the story, in imitation of the epic poems of Greece and Rome, in a manner the most romantic and best fitted to excite curiosity. Commencing immediately after the contest had taken place among the pirates, near the mouth of the Nile, for the possession of Chariclea, it represents a band of Egyptian banditti, assembled at the dawn of day on the summit of a promontory, and looking towards the sea. A vessel loaded with spoil is lying at anchor. The banks of the Nile are covered with dead bodies, and the fragments of a feast. As the robbers advance to seize the vessel, a young lady of exquisite beauty, whose

¹ Opere, vol. X. p. 108. ed. Venezia.

appearance is charmingly described, and who we afterwards find to be Chariclea, is represented sitting on a rock, while a young man lies wounded beside her. The narrative proceeds in the person of the author, till the meeting of Cnemon and Calasiris in the house of Nausicles, where Calasiris relates the early history of Chariclea, the rise of her affection for Theagenes, and her capture by the pirates. It must, however, be confessed, that the author has shown little judgment in making one of the characters in the romance recount the adventures of a hero and heroine. This is the most unusual and the worst species of narration that can be adopted, especially where an incipient passion is to be painted. The hero or heroine, while relating their story, may naturally describe their own feelings; and an author is supposed to possess the privilege of seeing into the hearts of his characters; but it can never be imagined that a third person in a novel should be able to perceive and pourtray all the sentiments and emotions of the principal actors.

But the defects in the plan of the work do not end with the narrative of Calasiris. After the author has resumed the story, he destroys our interest in every event by previously informing us that the persons concerned had dreamed it was to take

place. The effect, too, of one of the most striking situations in the work is injured by a fault in disposition. When Chariclea is about to be sacrificed in Ethiopia, we feel no terror for her fate, nor that unexpected joy at her deliverance, so much extolled by Huet;¹ as we know she is the daughter of Hydaspes, and has her credentials along with her. This knowledge, it is true, increases the pleasure that arises from sympathy with Hydaspes, and entering into his emotions; but the interest of the romance would have been greater, had the birth of Chariclea been concealed till the conclusion. This could have been done with slight alterations, and would have formed an *Anagnorisis*, not only to the characters in the work, but also to the reader.

Nor can the disposition of the episodes be much commended. The adventures of Cnemon, which seem to be taken from the story of Hyppolitus, have no great beauty or interest in themselves; they do not flow naturally from the main subject, and are introduced too early. The only other episode of much length is the account of the siege of Syene, and the battle between Oroondates and

¹ Sacrificii horrore inopina succedit lætitia, ob liberatam periculo præsentem puellam.—Huet. de Origine Fabularum, p. 37.

Hydaspes, which occupy the whole of the ninth book; and, however well described, entirely take away our concern in the fate of Chariclea, and in fact, in proportion to the excellence of the description, at the very moment when the story is approaching to a crisis, and when our interest would have been raised the highest, had our impressions remained uninterrupted.

Next to the nature of the subject, and the arrangement of the incidents, the *Ornaments* of a romance should be chiefly considered; of these the most important are the Style, the Characters, the Sentiments, and the Descriptions.

The Style of Heliodorus has been blamed as too figurative and poetical; but this censure seems chiefly applicable to those passages where he has interwoven verses of the Greek poets, from whom he has frequently borrowed. All his comparisons are said to be taken from Homer; but Sophocles, whom he often imitates, and sometimes copies, appears to have been his favourite author; yet, considering the period in which Heliodorus lived, his style is remarkable for its elegance and perspicuity, and would not have disgraced an earlier age. "His diction," says Photius,¹ "is such as becomes

¹ Cod. lxxiii. p. 158.

the subject ; it possesses great sweetness and simplicity, and is free from affectation ; the words used are expressive, and if sometimes figurative, as might be expected, they are always perspicuous, and such as clearly exhibit the subject of which the delineation is attempted. The periods too are constructed so as to correspond with the variations of the story ; they have an agreeable alternation of length and shortness ; and, finally, the whole composition is such as to have a correspondence with the narration."

In the painting of Character, Heliodorus is extremely defective ; Theagenes, in particular, is a weak and insipid personage. The author, indeed, possesses a wonderful art of introducing those who are destined to bear a part in the romance, in situations calculated to excite interest, but as we become acquainted with them we lose all concern in their fate from their insipidity. In fact, Chariclea is the only interesting person in the work. She is represented as endued with great strength of mind, united to a delicacy of feeling, and an address which turns every situation to the best advantage. Indeed in all the ancient romances the heroine is invariably the most interesting and spirited character ;—a circumstance which cannot but surprise, when we consider what an inferior part

the women of Greece acted in society, and how little they mingled in the affairs of life.

Heliodorus has been ridiculed by the author of the *Parnassus Reformed*, for having attributed to his hero such excessive modesty, that he gave his mistress a box on the ear when she approached to embrace him. But these raileries are founded on misrepresentation. Theagenes met Chariclea at Memphis, but mistaking both her person and character from her wretched dress and appearance, he inflicted a blow to get rid of her importunities—an unhandsome reception, no doubt, to any woman, but which proves nothing as to his sentiments concerning Chariclea. The reader will perhaps remark as he advances, that pirates and robbers have a principal share in the action of the succeeding Greek romances, as well as in the Ethiopic adventures. Their leaders are frequently the second characters in the work, and occupy the part of the unsuccessful lovers of the heroine; but are not always painted as endued with any peculiar bad qualities, or as exciting horror in the other persons of the work. Nor is this representation inconsistent with the manners of the period in which the action of these romances is placed. In the early ages of Greece, piracy was not accounted a dishonourable employment. In the ancient

poets; those that sail along the shore are usually accosted with the question, whether they are pirates, as if the enquiry could not be considered a reproach from those who were anxious to be informed, and as if those who were interrogated would not scruple to acknowledge their vocation. Even at the time of the Peloponnesian war, the Ætolians, Acarnanians, and other nations, subsisted by piracy; and in the early ages of Greece it was the occupation of all those who resided near the coast. "The Grecians," says Thucydides, in the very beginning of his History, "took up the trade of piracy under the command of persons of the greatest ability amongst them; and for the sake of enriching such adventurers and subsisting their poor, they landed and plundered by surprise unfortified places, or scattered villages. Nor was this an employment of reproach, but rather an instrument of glory. Some people of the continent are even at the present day a proof of this, as they still attribute honour to such exploits, if performed with due respect and humanity."

Heliodorus abounds in Descriptions, some of which are extremely interesting. His accounts of many of the customs of the Egyptians are said to be very correct, and he describes particular places with an accuracy which gives an appearance of

reality to his romance. He seldom, however, delineates the great outlines of nature, or touches on those accidents which render scenery sublime or beautiful—he chiefly delights in minute descriptions of the pomp of embassies and processions, and, as was natural in a priest, of sacrifices, or religious rites. These might be tiresome or even disgusting in a modern novel, but the representation of manners, of customs, and of ceremonies, is infinitely more valuable in an old romance, than pictures of general nature.

Although I cannot trace the resemblance which is said to exist between the work of Heliodorus, and that species of modern novel first introduced by Richardson,* there can be no doubt that Theagenes and Chariclea has supplied with materials many of the early writers of romance. It was imitated in the composition of Achilles Tatius, and subsequent Greek fablers, and was unquestionably the model of that species of heroic fiction, which, through the writings of Gomberville and Scudery, became for a considerable period so popular and prevalent in France. The modern Italian poets have also availed themselves of the incidents that

* Barbauld's Preface to Richardson.

occur in the work of Heliodorus. The circumstances of the birth and early life of Clorinda, related by Arsete in the twelfth canto of the *Jerusalem Delivered*, are taken with hardly any variation from the story of the infancy of Chariclea.² The intended sacrifice and subsequent discovery of the birth of Chariclea have been imitated in the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini, and through it in the *Astrea* of D'Urfé.

Racine had at one time proposed writing a drama on the subject of this romance, a plan which has been accomplished by Dorat, in his tragedy of *Theagenes and Chariclea*, which was acted at Paris in the year 1762. It also suggested the plot of an old English tragi-comedy by an unknown author, entitled *The Strange Discovery*.

Hardy, the French poet, wrote eight tragedies in verse on the same subject, without materially altering the ground-work of the romance,—an instance of literary prodigality which is perhaps unexampled. The story, though well fitted for narrative, is unsuitable for tragedy, which indeed is acknowledged by Dorat in his preliminary discourse. “I was seized,” observes he, “with en-

² *Gerus. Liber. canto 2. st. 21, &c.*

thusiam; I raised a tottering edifice with romantic proportions, and wrote with inconceivable warmth a cold and languid drama."

If we may judge by success, the events of the romance are better adapted to furnish materials to the artist than the tragic poet. Two of the most striking incidents that occur in the work of Heliodorus have been finely delineated by Raphael, in separate paintings, in which he was assisted by Julio Romanò. In one he has seized the moment when Theagenes and Chariclea meet in the temple of Delphos, and Chariclea presents Theagenes with a torch to kindle the sacrifice. In the other he has chosen for his subject the capture of the Tyrian ship, in which Calasiris was conducting Theagenes and Chariclea to the coast of Sicily. The vessel is supposed to have already struck to the pirates, and Chariclea is exhibited in a supplicating posture, imploring Trachinus that she might not be separated from her lover and Calasiris.

The romance of Theagenes and Chariclea was received with much applause in the age in which it appeared. The popularity of a work invariably produces imitation;—and hence the style of composition which had recently been introduced, was soon adopted by various writers.

Of these, Achilles Tatius¹ comes next to Heliodorus in time, and perhaps in merit. Though in many respects he has imitated his predecessor, it may in the first place be remarked, that he has adopted a totally different mode of narrative. The author introduces himself as gazing at the picture of Eutropa, which was placed in the temple of Venus in Sidon. While thus employed, he is accosted by Clitophon, who, without farther acquaintance, relates to him his whole adventures, which are comprised in eight books. This way of introducing the story is no doubt very absurd, but when once it is commenced, the plan of narration is preferable to that part of Theagenes and Chariclea which is told by an inferior character in the work.

The following is the story of the romance:— Clitophon resided at his father's house in Tyre; there his cousin Leucippe came to seek refuge from a war which was at that time carried on against her native country. These young relatives became mutually enamoured; and Leucippe's mother having discovered Clitophon one night in the chamber of her daughter, the lovers resolved to avoid the effects of her anger by flight. Accom-

¹ Ἀχιλλεύς Τατις Ἀλεξανδρεὺς, Ἐρωτικὴν βιβλία οὕτω. Ed. Boden. Lipsiæ, 1776.—See Appendix, No. III.

panied by Clinias, a friend of Clitophon, they sail in the first instance for Berytus. A conversation which took place between Clitophon and Clinias during the voyage, seems to have been suggested by the singular disquisition contained in the *Ægyptus*, attributed to Lucian, and usually published in his works. After a short stay at Berytus, the fugitives set out for Alexandria: the vessel was wrecked on the third day of the voyage, but Clitophon and Leucippe, adhering with great presence of mind to the same plank, were driven on shore near Pelusium, in Egypt. At this place they hired a vessel to carry them to Alexandria, but while sailing up the Nile they were seized by a band of robbers who infested the banks of the river. The robbers are soon after attacked by the Egyptian forces, commanded by Charmides, to whom Clitophon escaped during the heat of the engagement—Leucippe however, remained in the power of the enemy, who, with much solemnity, apparently cut up our heroine close to the army of Charmides, and in the sight of her lover, who was prevented from interfering by a deep fosse which separated the two armies. The ditch having been filled up, Clitophon in the course of the night went to immolate himself on the spot where Leucippe had been interred. He arrived at her tomb, but was prevented from execu-

ting his purpose by the sudden appearance of his servant Satyrus, and of Menelaus, a young man who had sailed with him in the vessel from Berytus. These two persons had also escaped from the shipwreck, and had afterwards fallen into the power of the robbers. By them Leucippe had been accommodated with a false *uterus*, made of sheep's skin, which gave rise to the *deceptio visus* above related. At the command of Menelaus, Leucippe issued from the tomb, and proceeded with Clitophon and Menelaus to the quarters of Charicides. In a short time this commander became enamoured of Leucippe, as did also Gorgias, one of his officers. Gorgias gave her a potion calculated to inspire her with reciprocal passion, but which, being too strong, affected her with a species of madness of a very indecorous character.¹ She is cured, however, by Chaereas, another person who had fallen in love with her, and had discovered the secret of the potion from the servant of Gorgias. Taking Chaereas along with them, Clitophon and Leucippe sail for Alexandria. Soon

¹ During this state of mental alienation she commits many acts of extravagance. She boxes her lover on the face, repulses Menelaus with her feet, and at last quarrels with her petticoats; ἡ δὲ προσπάλαιεν ἡμῶν ὡδὲν φροντίζουσα κρόπτειν ἔσται γυνὴ μὴ ἐξῆσθαι θέλει. l. 4. c. 9.

after their arrival, Leucippe was carried off from the neighbourhood of that place, and hurried on board a vessel by a troop of banditti employed by Chæreas. Clitophon pursued the vessel, but when just coming up with it he saw the head of a person he mistook for Leucippe struck off by the robbers. Disheartened by this incident, he gave over the pursuit and returned to Alexandria. Here he is informed that Melite, a rich Ephesian widow, at that time residing in Alexandria, had fallen in love with him. This intelligence he received from his old friend Clinias, who after the wreck of the vessel in which he had embarked with Clitophon, had got on shore by the usual expedient of a plank, and now suggested to his friend that he should avail himself of the predilection of Melite. In compliance with this suggestion, he set sail with her for Ephesus, but persisted in postponing the nuptials till his arrival at that place, spite of the most vehement importunities on the part of the widow. On their arrival at Ephesus the marriage took place, but before Melite's object in the marriage had been accomplished, Clitophon discovered Leucippe among his wife's slaves; and Thersander, Melite's husband, who was supposed to be drowned, arrived at Ephesus. Clitophon was instantly confined by the enraged husband; but, on

condition of putting the last seal to the now invalid marriage, he escaped by the intervention of Melite. He had not proceeded far when he was overtaken by Thersander, and brought back to confinement. Thersander, of course, fell in love with Leucippe, but not being able to engage her affections, he brought two actions; one declaratory, that Leucippe was his slave, and a prosecution against Clitophon for marrying his wife. The debates on both sides are insufferably tiresome. The priest of Diana, with whom Leucippe had taken refuge, lavishes much abuse on Thersander, which is returned on his part with equal volubility. Leucippe is at last subjected to a trial of her chastity in the cave of Diana, from which the sweetest music issued when entered by those who resembled its goddess. Never were notes heard so melodious as those by which Leucippe was vindicated. Thersander was of course nonsuited, and retired loaded with infamy. Leucippe then related that it was a woman dressed in her clothes, whose head had been struck off by the banditti, in order to deter Clitophon from farther pursuit; that a quarrel having arisen among them on her account, Chaereas was slain, and that after his death she was sold by the others to Sosthenes,

who purchased her for Theander, in whose service she was when discovered by Clitophon. In this romance a number of the descriptions are borrowed from Philostratus, and the Hero and Leander of Musaeus. Many of the events have also been taken from Heliodorus. Like that author, Tatius makes frequent use of robbers, pirates, and dreams; but the general style of his work is totally different. If there be less sweetness and interest than in Theagenes and Chariolea, there is more bustle in the action. A number of the incidents too are original and well imagined—such as Clitophon's discourse on love with Satyrus, in the hearing of Leucippe; and the beautiful incident of the bee, which has been adopted by Tasso¹ and D'Urfé. Among these, too, may be mentioned the petition of Melite to Leucippe, whom she believes to be a Thessalian, to procure her herbs for a potion that may gain her the affections of Clitophon. The sacrifice, too, of Leucippe by the robbers in the presence of her lover, is happily imagined, were not the solution of the enigma so wretched. As the work advances, however, it must be confessed, that it gradually decreases in

¹ Aminta, act I. scene 2.

interest, and that these agreeable incidents are more thinly scattered. Towards the end, indeed, it becomes insufferably tiresome, and the author scruples not to violate all verisimilitude in the events related.

Indeed, through the whole romance, want of probability of incident seems the great defect. Nothing can be more absurd or unnatural than the false uterus—nothing can be worse imagined than the vindication of the heroine in the cave of Diana, which is the final solution of the romance: When it is necessary for the story that Themander should be informed who Lencippe is, the author makes him overhear a soliloquy in which she reports to herself a full account of her genealogy, and an abridgement of her whole adventures. A soliloquy can never be properly introduced, unless the speaker is under the influence of some strong passion, or reasons on some important subject; but as Heliodorus borrowed from Sophocles, so Tatius is said to have imitated Euripides. From him he may have taken this unnatural species of soliloquy, as this impropriety exists in almost all the introductions to the tragedies of that poet.

Tatius has been much blamed for the immorality of his romance, and it must be acknowledged that there are particular passages which are extremely

exceptionable ; yet, however odious some of these may be considered, the general moral tendency of the story is good ;—a remark which may be extended to all the Greek romances. Tatius punishes his hero and heroine for eloping from their father's house, and afterwards rewards them for their long fidelity.

The Clitophon and Leucippe of Tatius does not seem to have been composed like Theagenes and Chariclea, as a romance equally interesting and well written throughout, but as a species of patch-work, in different places of which the author might exhibit the variety of his talents. At one time he is anxious to shew his taste in painting and sculpture ; at another his acquaintance with natural history ; and towards the end of the book his skill in declamation. But his principal excellence lies in descriptions, and though these are too luxuriant, they are in general beautiful, the objects being at once well selected, and so painted as to form in the mind of the reader a distinct and lively image. As examples of his merit in this way may be instanced, his description of a garden, (l. i. c. 16,) and of a tempest followed by a shipwreck, (l. iii. c. 234.) We may also mention his accounts of the pictures of Europa, (l. i. c. 1,) of Andromeda, (l. iii. c. 7,) and Prometheus, (l. iii. c. 8,) in which

his descriptions and criticisms are executed with very considerable taste and feeling. Indeed, the remarks on these paintings are a presumption of the advanced state of the art at the period in which Tatius wrote, or at least of the estimation in which it was held, and afford matter of much curious speculation to connoisseurs and artists.

Writers, however, are apt to indulge themselves in enlarging where they excel: accordingly the descriptions of Tatius are too numerous, and sometimes very absurdly introduced. Thus Clitophon, when mentioning the preparations for his marriage with a woman he disliked, gives a long description of a neck-lace which was purchased for her, and also an account of the origin of dying purple, (l. ii. c. 11;) he likewise introduces very awkwardly an account of various zoological curiosities. (l. ii. c. 14.) Indeed, he seems particularly fond of natural history, and gives very animated and correct descriptions of the hippopotamus, (l. iv. c. 2, &c.) of the elephant, (l. iv. c. 4,) and the crocodile. (l. iv. c. 19.)

The description of the rise and progress of the passion of Clitophon for Leucippe is extremely well executed. Of this there is nothing in the romance of Heliodorus. Theagenes and Chariclea at first sight are violently and mutually enamour-

ed; in Tatius we have more of the restless agitation of love and the arts of courtship. Indeed, this is by much the best part of the Clitophon and Leucippe, as the author discloses very considerable acquaintance with the human heart. This knowledge also appears in the sentiments scattered through the work, though it must be confessed that in many of his remarks he is apt to subtilize and refine too much.

In point of style, Tatius is said by Huet and other critics¹ to excel Heliodorus, and all the other writers of Greek romance. His language has been chiefly applauded for its conciseness, ease, and simplicity. Photius, who wrote tolerable Greek himself, and must have been a better judge than any later critic, observes, "with regard to diction and composition, Tatius seems to me to excel. When he employs figurative language it is clear and natural: his sentences are precise and limpid, and such as by their sweetness greatly delight the ear."²

In the delineation of character Tatius is still more defective than Heliodorus.—Clitophon, the principal person in the romance, is a wretchedly weak and pusillanimous being; he twice allows himself to be

¹ Huet, p. 40. Boden. præf. p. 15.

² Photius, Bib. Cod. lxxxvii. p. 206.

beaten by Thersander, without making any resistance—he has neither sense nor courage, nor indeed any virtue except uncommon fidelity to his mistress. She is a much more interesting, and is indeed a heroic character.

We now proceed to the analysis of a romance different in its nature from the works already mentioned; and of a species which may be distinguished by the appellation of *Pastoral* romance.

It may be conjectured with much probability, that pastoral composition sometimes expressed the devotion, and sometimes formed the entertainment, of the first generations of mankind. The sacred writings sufficiently inform us that it existed among the eastern nations during the earliest ages. Rural images are every where scattered through the Old Testament; and the Song of Solomon in particular beautifully delineates the charms of a country life, while it paints the most amiable affections of the mind, and the sweetest scenery of nature. A number of passages of Theocritus bear a striking resemblance to descriptions in the inspired pastoral; and many critics have believed that he had studied its beauties, and transferred them to his eclogues. Theocritus was imitated in his own dialect by Moschus and Bion; and Virgil, taking ad-

vantage of a different language, copied yet rivalled the Sicilian. The Bucolics of the Roman bard seem to have been considered as precluding all attempts of the same kind; for, if we except the feeble efforts of Calpurnius, and his contemporary Nemesianus, who lived in the third century, no subsequent specimen of pastoral poetry was, as far as I know, produced till the revival of literature.

It was during this interval that Longus, a Greek sophist,¹ who is said to have lived soon after the age of Tatius, wrote his pastoral romance of Daphnis and Chloe, which is the earliest, and by far the finest example that has appeared of this species of composition. Availing himself of the beauties of the pastoral poets who preceded him, he has added to their simplicity of style, and charming pictures of Nature, a story which possesses considerable interest, and of which the following abstract is presented to the reader.

In the neighbourhood of Mitylene, the principal city of Lesbos, Lamon, a goatherd, as he was one day tending his flock, discovered an infant sucking one of his goats with surprising dexterity. He takes home the child, and presents him to his

¹ Appendix, No. IV.

wife Myrtale ; at the same time he delivers to her a purple cloak with which the boy was adorned, and a sword with an ivory hilt, which was lying by his side. Lamon having no children of his own, resolves to bring up the foundling, and bestows on him the pastoral name of Daphnis.

About two years after this occurrence, Dryas, a neighbouring shepherd, finds in the cave of the nymphs, which is beautifully described in the romance, a female infant, nursed by one of his ewes. The child is brought to the cottage of Dryas, receives the name of Chloe, and is cherished by the old man as if she had been his daughter.

When Daphnis had reached the age of fifteen, and Chloe that of twelve, Lamon and Dryas, their reputed fathers, had corresponding dreams on the same night. The nymphs of the cave in which Chloe had been discovered appear to each, delivering Daphnis and Chloe to a winged boy, bearing a bow and arrows, who commands that Daphnis should be sent to keep goats, and the girl to tend the sheep : Daphnis and Chloe have not long entered on their new employments, which they exercise with a care of their flocks, increased by a knowledge of the circumstances of their infancy, when chance brings them to pasture on the same spot. It was then, says the romance, the beginning

of spring, and every species of flower bloomed through the woods, the meadows, and mountains.—The tender flocks sported around—the lambs skipped on the hills—the bees hummed through the vallies—and the birds filled the groves with their song. Daphnis collects the wandering sheep of Chloe, and Chloe drives from the rocks the goats of Daphnis. They make reeds in common, and share together their milk and their wine;—their youth, their beauty, the season of the year, every thing tends to inspire them with a mutual passion; Daphnis having one day fallen into a covered pit which was dug for the wolf, and being considerably hurt, receives from Chloe a kiss, which serves as the first fuel to the flame of love.

Chloe had another admirer, Dorco, the cow-herd, who having in vain requested her in marriage from Dryas her reputed father, resolves to carry her off by force; for this purpose he disguises himself as a wolf, and lurks among some bushes near a place where Chloe used to pasture her sheep. In this garb he is discovered and attacked by the dogs, who entered into his frolic with unexpected alacrity, but is preserved from being torn to pieces by the timely arrival of Daphnis. From the example of Dorco this became a

common stratagem among pastoral characters. In the *Pastor Fido*, act iv. sc. ii. Dorinda disguises herself as a wolf, and the troubadour Vidal was hunted down in consequence of a similar experiment.

The spring was now at an end—summer arose and all Nature flourished—the trees were loaded with fruits, and the fields were covered with corn—every thing tended to inspire pleasure—the sweet hum of the cicada, the fragrance of the ripening apples, and the bleating of the sheep. The gliding streams were heard as if they modulated the song, and the breezes which rustled among the pines seemed the breath of the flute.

In the beginning of autumn some Tyrian pirates having landed on the island, seize the oxen of Dorco, and carry off Daphnis, whom they meet sauntering on the shore. Chloe hearing Daphnis calling for assistance from the ship, flies for help to Dorco—she reaches him when he is just expiring of the wounds inflicted by the Tyrian corsairs. Before his death he gives her his pipe, on which, after she had closed his eyes, she plays according to his instructions a certain tune, (probably the *Ronce des Vaches*,) which being heard by the oxen in the Tyrian vessel, they all leap overboard and upset the ship. The pirates being loaded with

heavy armour are drowned, but Daphnis swims safe to shore.

Here ends the first book, and in the second the author proceeds to relate, that during autumn Daphnis and Chloe were engaged in the labours, or rather the delights, of the vintage. After the grapes had been gathered and pressed, and the new wine treasured in casks, having returned to feed their flocks, they are accosted one day by an old man named Philetas, who tells them a long story of seeing Cupid in a garden, adding, that Daphnis and Chloe were to be dedicated to his service; the lovers naturally enquire who Cupid is, for, though they had felt his influence, they were ignorant of his name. Philetas describes his power and his attributes, and points out the remedy for the pains he inflicts.¹

The instructions of this venerable old man to the lovers were sufficiently explicit, but, spite of the lesson they had received, they appear to have made very little advancement. Their progress was on one occasion interrupted by the arrival of certain young men of Methymnæa. The twigs by which the ship of these young men was tied to the shore had been eaten through by some goats, and

¹ φιλεμα, περιβολη, και σιγκαταελθην γαμωνος σωματι.

the vessel had been carried away by the tide and the land breeze. The crew, having proceeded up the country, in search of the owner of the animals, and not having found him, seize Daphnis as a substitute, and lash him severely, till other shepherds come to his assistance. Philetas is appointed judge between Daphnis and the Methymnæans, but the latter refusing to abide by his decision, which was unfavourable to them, are driven from the territory. They return, however, next day, and carry off Chloe, with a great quantity of booty. Having landed at a place of shelter, which lay in the course of their voyage, they pass the night in festivity, but at dawn of day they are terrified by the unlooked-for appearance of Pan, who threatens them with being drowned before they arrive at their intended place of destination, unless they set Chloe at liberty. Through this respectable interposition, Chloe is allowed to return home, and is speedily restored to the arms of Daphnis.—The grateful lovers sing hymns to the nymphs. On the following day they sacrifice to Pan, and hang a goat's skin on a pine adjoining his image. The feast which follows this ceremony is attended by all the old shepherds in the neighbourhood, who recount the adventures of their youth, and their children dance to the sound of the pipe.

The third book commences with the approach of winter—a sudden fall of snow shuts up all the roads, the peasants are confined to their cottages, and the earth nowhere appears except on the banks of rivers, or sides of fountains. No one leads forth his flocks to pasture; but by a blazing fire some twist cords for the net, some plait goat's hair, and others make snares for the birds; the hogs are fed with acorns in the sty, the sheep with leaves in the folds, and the oxen with chaff in the stalls.

The season of the year precludes the interviews of Daphnis and Chloe. No longer could they meet in the fields, and Daphnis was afraid to excite suspicion by visiting the object of his passion, at the cottage of Dryas. He ventures, however, to approach its vicinity, under pretext of laying snares for birds. Engaged in this employment, he waits a long time without any person appearing from the house. At length, when about to depart, Dryas himself comes out in pursuit of a dog who had run off with the family dinner. He perceives Daphnis with his game, and accordingly, as a profitable speculation, invites him into the cottage. The birds he had caught are prepared for supper, a second cup is filled, and a new fire kindled; Daphnis is asked to remain next day to attend a sacrifice which is about to be performed to Bacchus. By

accepting the invitation, he for some time longer enjoys the society of Chloe. The lovers part, praying for the return of spring; but while the winter lasted, Daphnis frequently visits the habitation of Dryas.

When the spring returns, Daphnis and Chloe are the first to lead out their flocks to pasture. When they meet in the fields their ardour is increased by long absence, and the season of the year, but their hearts remain innocent;—a purity which the author still imputes not to virtue, but to ignorance.

Chremis, an old man in the neighbourhood, had married a young woman called Lycaenium, who falls in love with Daphnis; she becomes acquainted with the perplexity in which he is placed with regard to Chloe, and resolves at once to gratify her own passion, and to free him from his embarrassment.

Daphnis, however, still hesitates to practise with Chloe the lesson he had received from Lycaenium; and the reader is again tired with the repetition of preludes, for which he can no longer find an excuse.

In the fourth book we are told that, towards the close of summer, a fellow-servant of Lamon arrives from Mytelene, to announce that the lord of the

territory on which the reputed fathers of Demetrius and Chloë pastured their flocks, would be with them at the approach of vintage.

Lamon prepares every thing for his reception with much assiduity, but bestows particular attention on the embellishment of a spacious garden which adjoined his cottage, and of which the different parts are described as having been arranged in a manner fitted to inspire all the agreeable emotions which the art of gardening can produce. "It was," says the author, "the length of a stadium, and the breadth of four *plethra*, was in a lofty situation, and formed an oblong. It was planted with all sorts of trees; with apples, myrtles, pears, pomegranates, figs, olives, and the tall vine, which, reclining on the pear and apple trees, seemed to vie with them in its fruits. Nor were the forest trees, as the plane, the pine, and the cypress, less abundant. To them clung not the vine, but the ivy, whose large and ripening berry emulated the grape. These forest trees surrounded the fruit-bearers, as if they had been a shelter formed by art; and the whole was protected by a slight inclosure. The garden was divided by paths; the stems of the trees were far separated from each other, but the branches entwined above, formed a continued arbour: here too were beds of flowers,

some of which the earth bore spontaneously, while others were produced by cultivation;—roses, hyacinths, were planted and tended; the ground of itself yielded the violet and the narcissus. Here were shade in summer, sweetness of flowers in spring, the pleasures of vintage in autumn, and fruits in every season of the year. Hence too the plain could be seen, and flocks feeding; the sea also, and the ships sailing over it; so that all these might be numbered among the delights of the garden. In the centre there was a temple to Bacchus, and an altar erected; the altar was girt with ivy—the temple was surrounded with palm: within were represented the triumphs and loves of the god.”

On this garden Daphnis had placed his chief hopes of conciliating the good-will of his master; and through his favour of being united to Chloe; for it would appear the consent of parties was not sufficient for this, and that in Greece, as among the Serfs in Russia, the finest gratification of the heart was dependent on the will of a master. Lampis, a cow-herd, who had asked Chloe in marriage from Dryas, and had been refused, resolves on the destruction of this garden. Accordingly, when it is dark, he tears out the shrubs by the roots, and tramples on the flowers. Dreadful is the consternation of Lamón, in beholding on the following

morning the havoc that had been made. Towards evening his terror is increased by the appearance of Eudromus, one of his master's servants, who gives notice that he would be with them in three days.

Astylus, (the son of Dionysophanes the proprietor of the territory,) arrives first, and promises to obtain pardon from his father of the mischance that had happened to the garden. Astylus is accompanied by a parasite, Gnatho, who is smitten with a friendship, *a la Grecque*, for Daphnis: this having come to the knowledge of Lamon, who overhears the parasite ask and obtain Daphnis as a servant from Astylus, he conceives it incumbent on him to reveal to Dionysophanes, who had by this time arrived, the mysteries attending the infancy of Daphnis. He at the same time produces the ornaments he had found with the child, on which Dionysophanes instantly recognises his son. Having married early in youth, he had a daughter and two sons, but being a prudent man, and satisfied with this stock, he had exposed his fourth child, Daphnis; a measure which had become somewhat less expedient, as his daughter and one of his sons died immediately after in one day, and Astylus alone survived.

The change in the situation of Daphnis does

not alter his attachment to Chloe. He begs her in marriage of his father, who, being informed of the circumstances of her infancy, invites all the distinguished persons in the neighbourhood to a festival, at which the articles of dress found along with Chloe are exhibited. This was not his own device, but was suggested to him in a dream by the nymphs. Its success answers expectation; Chloe being acknowledged as his daughter by Megacles, one of the guests, who was now in a prosperous condition, but rivalling his friend Dionysophanes in paternal tenderness, had exposed his child while in difficulties. There being now no farther obstacle to the union of Daphnis and Chloe, their marriage is solemnized with rustic pomp, and they lead through the rest of their days a happy and a pastoral life.

In some respects a prose romance is better adapted than the eclogue or drama to pastoral composition. The eclogue is confined within certain limits, and must terminate before interest can be excited. A series of Bucolics, where two or three shepherds are introduced contending for the reward of a crook or a kid, and at most descanting for a short while on similar topics, resembles a collection of the first scenes of a number of comedies, of which the commencement can only be listened to as unfolding the subsequent action. The dra-

ina is, no doubt, a better form of pastoral writing than detached eclogues, but at the same time does not well accord with rustic manners and description. In dramatic composition, the representation of strong passions is best calculated to produce interest or emotion, but the feelings of rural life should be painted as tranquil and calm. In choosing a prose romance as the vehicle of pastoral writing, Longus has adopted a form that may include all the beauties that arise from the description of rustic manners, or the scenery of nature, and which, as far as the incidents of rural life admit, may interest by an agreeable fable, and delight by a judicious alternation of narrative and dialogue.

Longus has also avoided many of the faults into which his modern imitators have fallen, and which have brought this style of composition into so much disrepute; his characters never express the conceits of affected gallantry, nor involve themselves in abstract reasoning; and he has not loaded his romance with those long and constantly recurring episodes, which in the *Diana of Montemayor*, and the *Astrea of D'Urfé*, fatigue the attention and render us indifferent to the principal story. Nor does he paint that chimerical state of society, termed the golden age, in which the character-

tic fruits of rural life are erased, but attempts to please by a genuine imitation of Nature, and by descriptions of the manners, the rustic occupations, or rural enjoyments, of the inhabitants of the country where the scene of the pastoral is laid.

Huet has remarked, I think unjustly, that it is a great defect in the plan of this romance, to begin with the infancy of the hero and heroine, and carry on the story beyond the time of their marriage.* The author might, perhaps, have been blameable had he dwelt long on these periods; but, in fact, the romance concludes with the nuptials of Daphnis and Chloe; and the reader is merely told in a few lines that they lived a pastoral life, and had a son and daughter. Nor, if the reader be interested in the characters of the preceding story, is it unpleasant for him to hear in general terms, when it comes to an end, how these persons passed their lives, and whether their fortune was

* L'économie mal entendue de sa fable est un défaut encore plus essentiel. Il commence grossièrement, a la naissance de ses bergers et ne finit pas même a leur mariage. Il étend sa narration jusqu' à leurs enfants et a leur vieillesse; and again, C'est sortir entièrement du vrai caractère de cette espèce d'écrits: il les faut finir au jour des noces, et se taire sur les suites du mariage. Une heroine de Roman grosse et accouchée est un étrange personnage.—*Huet de l'Origine des Romans.*

stable. I do not see that in a pastoral romance, even a more ample description of conjugal felicity would have been so totally disgusting as the critic seems to imagine; far less is an account of the childhood of the characters objectionable, even where it is more minute than that given by Longus.

The pastoral is in general very beautifully written;—the style, though it has been censured on account of the reiteration of the same forms of expression, and as betraying the sophist in some passages by a play on words, and affected antithesis, is considered as the purest specimen of the Greek language produced in that late period; the descriptions of rural scenery and rural occupations are extremely pleasing, and, if I may use the expression, there is a sort of amenity and repose

¹ Son style est simple, aisé, naturel, et concis sans obscurité; ses expressions sont pleines de vivacité et de feu, il produit avec esprit, il peint avec agrément, et dispose ses images avec adresse.—*De l'Orig. des Rom.*

Longi oratio pura, candida, suavis, multis articulis membrisque concisa et tamen numerosa, sine ullis salibus melle dulcior profuit, tanquam amnis argenteus virentibus utrinque sylvis inumbratus; et ita florens, ita picta, ita expolita est ut in ea, verborum omnes, omnes sententiarum illigentur lepores. Translationes caeteraque dicendi lumina ita apte disponit ut pictores colorum varietatem.—*Villoison prooem.*

diffused over the whole romance. This, indeed, may be considered as the chief excellence in a pastoral. In all our active pursuits, the end proposed is tranquillity, and even when we lose the hope of happiness, we are attracted by that of repose;—hence we are soothed and delighted with its representation, and fancy we partake of the pleasure.

In some respects, however, this romance, although its excellencies are many, is extremely defective. It is diversified with little variety, except what arises from the vicissitude of the seasons. The courtship of Daphnis is to the last degree monotonous, and the conversations between the lovers extremely insipid. The mythological tales also are totally uninteresting, and sometimes not very happily introduced.

Although the general moral attempted to be inculcated in the romance is not absolutely bad, yet there are particular passages so extremely reprehensible, that I know nothing like them in almost any work whatever. This depravity is the less excusable, as it was the professed design of the author to paint a state of the most perfect innocence.

There can be no doubt that the pastoral of Longus had a considerable influence on the style and

incidents of the subsequent Greek romances, particularly those of Eumathius and Theodorus Prodromus; but its effects on modern pastorals, particularly those which appeared in Italy during the sixteenth century, is a subject of more difficulty. Haet is of opinion, that it was not only the model of the *Astrea* of D'Urfé, and the *Diana* of Montemayor, but gave rise to the Italian dramatic pastoral. This opinion is combated by Villoison, on the grounds that the first edition of Longus was not published till 1598, and that Tasso died in the year 1595. It is true that the first *Greek* edition of Longus was not published till 1598, but there was a French translation by Amyot which appeared in 1589, and one in Latin verse by Gambara in 1569, either of which might have been seen by Tasso. But although this argument brought forward by Villoison is of little avail, he is probably right in the general notion he has adopted; that *Daphnis and Chloe* was not the origin of the pastoral drama. The *Sacrificio* of Agostino Beccari, which was the earliest specimen of this style of composition, and was acted at Ferrara in 1554, was written previous to the appearance of any edition or version of Longus. Nor is there any similarity in the story or incidents of the *Aminta* to those in *Daphnis and Chloe*, which should lead us to ima-

gine that the Greek romance had been imitated by Tasso.

It bears, however, a stronger likeness to the more recent dramatic pastorals of Italy. These are frequently founded on the exposure of children, who, after being brought up as shepherds by reputed fathers, are discovered by their real parents by means of tokens fastened to them when they were abandoned. There is also a considerable resemblance between the story of Daphnis and Chloe and that of the Gentle Shepherd. The plot was suggested to Ramsay by one of his friends, and he seems to have taken it from the Greek pastoral. But of all modern writers the person who has most closely imitated this romance is Gesner. In his *Idylls* there is the same poetical prose, the same beautiful rural descriptions, and the same innocence and simplicity, in the chief pastoral characters. In his pastoral of Daphnis, the scene of which is laid in Greece, he has painted, like Longus, the early and innocent attachment of a shepherdess and swain, and has only embellished his picture by the incidents that arise from rural occupations, and the revolutions of the year.

We shall conclude this article with remarking, that the story of Daphnis and Chloe is related in the person of the author. He feigns, that while

hunting in Lesbos, he saw in a grove consecrated to the nymphs a most beautiful picture, in which appeared children exposed, lovers plighting their faith, and incursions of pirates—that, having found an interpreter of this painting, he had expressed in writing what it represented, and produced a gift to Cupid, to Pan, and the nymphs; but which would be pleasing to all men, a medicine to the sick, a solace to the afflicted, which would remind him who had loved, and teach the inexperienced the nature and happiness of that passion.

Although the work of Longus was much admired by his contemporaries, and many of the incidents adopted in the fictitious narratives by which it was succeeded, none of the subsequent Greek fablers attempted to write pastoral romance, but chose Heliodorus, or rather Tatius, as their model.

Chariton, the earliest of these imitators, has been considered as inferior to Tatius in point of style, in which he exhibits a good deal of the sophist, but he far excels him in the probability and simplicity of his incidents—he also surpasses him in the general conduct of his work; as the romance advances, the interest increases to the end, and the fate of the characters is carefully concealed till the conclusion. Nor is it loaded with those episodes and lengthened descriptions which en-

cumber the Clitophon and Leucippe of Tattius. The author is also more careful than his predecessor not to violate probability, and seems anxious to preserve an appearance of historical fidelity.

A considerable part of the commencement of the *Chaereas and Callirhoe*² of Chariton has been lost, and the first incident we now meet with is the marriage of the hero and heroine. The other suitors of Callirhoe, enraged at the preference given to Chaereas, contrive to make him jealous of his wife. In a transport of passion he kicks her so violently that she swoons, and is believed dead. This incident is one of the worst imagined to be met with in any of the Greek romances. It leaves such an impression of the brutality of the principal character, that we are not reconciled to him by all his subsequent grief and diligent search after Callirhoe;—our disgust might perhaps have been lessened, had the author made him employ a dagger or poison.

After her supposed death, Callirhoe is buried along with a great quantity of treasure. It was customary in Greece that effects of a value proportioned to the rank of the deceased should be

² Χαρίτωνος Ἀφροδισιαῶς τῶν περὶ Χαίρεαν καὶ Καλλιρρόην ἐρωτικῶν διηγημάτων λόγος. 8.—Appendix, No. V.

deposited in tombs. It is mentioned in Strabo, (l. 8,) that the persons who were sent by Caesar to colonize Corinth, left no tomb unexplored; *οὐδὲν τάφον ἀνευρέσαντες*;—an anecdote which evinces the existence of that species of depredation which forms a leading incident in this and so many of the other Greek romances. Callirhoe revives soon after her interment, and at this critical moment, Theron, a pirate, who had witnessed the concealment of the treasure, breaks open the sepulchre, which was placed near the shore, and sets sail with the booty and Callirhoe. At Miletus he sells her to Dionysius, an Ionian prince, who soon becomes enamoured of his slave. Chariton is the first writer of romance who has introduced an interesting male character. Dionysius is represented generous, learned, valiant, and tender;—nor was there any thing improper in his attachment to Callirhoe, as she disclosed the nobleness of her birth, but concealed that she was the wife of another;—he makes love to her with all possible delicacy, and imposes no restraint on her inclinations. Callirhoe, as she had already one husband, feels some scruples at accepting a second; but at length agrees to espouse Dionysius, with the view of giving a nominal father to the child of which she was pregnant.

The following part of the romance is occupied with the attempts of Mithridates, satrap of Caria, to obtain possession of Callirhoe, for whom he had conceived a violent affection—the search made by Chaereas for his wife after discovering that she was innocent, and yet alive—and his arrival in Asia to reclaim her from Dionysius.

At length all parties are summoned to Babylon, to maintain their cause before Artaxerxes. Mithridates and Chaereas appear first, and afterwards Dionysius arrives, accompanied by Callirhoe. There is no part of the romance so unnatural as the account of the extraordinary effects produced by the beauty of Callirhoe, on the beholders at Babylon, and the regions through which she passed on her journey; but after her arrival, the flattery which we may suppose paid to a king in a despotic court, by satraps and eunuchs, is finely touched; and the meeting of Chaereas with Callirhoe in the palace, while the cause is under cognizance, is happily imagined. The king, as was to be expected, having become enamoured of the object of dispute, defers giving any decision, in order to protract her stay in Babylon. Accounts, meanwhile, arrive of a revolt of the Egyptians, and of their invasion of Syria. The king, accompanied by Dionysius, pro-

ceeds against them, and, according to the custom of the Persian monarchs, takes the ladies of the court, among whom Callirhoe was now numbered, along with him. But, as they are found to be cumbersome on the march, they are left at Arado, an island at a short distance from the continent. Chaereas, exasperated by a false report that the king had bestowed Callirhoe on Dionysius, joins the Egyptian forces, takes Tyre by stratagem, and, in consideration of his talents as a general, is appointed to the command of the fleet. Having destroyed the Persian navy, soon after his elevation, in a great battle which was fought near Arado, he takes possession of the island, and recovers Callirhoe. In the course of the night succeeding the day which had been so propitious to the love and glory of Chaereas, a messenger arrives at Arado with accounts of the total overthrow of the Egyptian army, which had been chiefly effected by the skill and valour of Dionysius. To him Callirhoe writes a very handsome letter, and returns with Chaereas to Syracuse.

About the same time with Chariton, there lived three persons of the name of Xenophon, each of whom wrote a romance. These authors were distinguished by the names of Antiochenus, Cyprius, and Ephesius. Antiochenus, in imitation of Jam-

blichus, called his romance, *Babylonica*. The second Xenophon entitled his work, (which relates the loves of Cinyras, Myrrha, and Adonis,) *Cypriaca*.

The *Ephesiaca* (which has alone been published,) consists of ten books, and comprehends the loves of Habrocomas and Anthia. The incidents of this work are extremely similar to those that occur in the preceding romances. The hero and heroine become enamoured in the temple of Diana; they are married early in the work, but in obedience to an oracle of Apollo, are forced by their parents to travel, and in the course of their wanderings experience the accustomed adventures with robbers and pirates. On one occasion Anthia, when separated from her husband by a series of misfortunes, falls into the hands of banditti, from whom she is rescued by a young nobleman, named Perilaus, who becomes enamoured of her. Anthia, fearing violence, affects a consent to marry him; but on the arrival of the appointed time swallows a soporific draught which she had procured from a physician, who was the friend of Perilaus, and to whom she had intrusted the secret of her story. Much lamentation is made for her death, and she is conveyed with great pomp to a sepulchre. As she had only drunk a sleeping po-

tion, she soon awakes in the tomb, which is plundered by pirates for the sake of the treasure it contained.

Mr Douce, in his *Illustrations of Shakspeare*, has pointed out the resemblance between this adventure and the leading incident of the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*. The *Ephesiaca* he acknowledges was not published at the time when Luigi da Porto wrote the novel, supposed to be Shakspeare's original, but he thinks it very probable he had met with the manuscript of the Greek romance.

Throughout the work the author of the *Ephesiaca* seems to think it necessary that every woman who sees Habrocomas, should fall in love with him, and that all the male characters in the work should become enamoured of Anthia. The story also is extremely complicated; and a remark which was formerly made respecting *Heliodorus* may be applied with double force to *Xenophon*; the changes of fortune in his romance are too numerous, and too much of the same nature. *Xenophon*, however, has received much commendation from the critics, for the elegance of his style, which is said to bear a strong resemblance to that of *Longus*, and is declared by *Politian* to be smooth as that of a more renowned *Xenophon*. "Sic utique Xeno-

phon scribit, non quidem Atheniensis ille, sed alter eo non insuavior Ephesius."—(*Polit. Misc. c. 15.*)

After the age in which Chariton and the Xenophons are supposed to have lived, more than three centuries elapsed without the production of any fictitious narrative deserving our attention. The first romance that appeared at the end of this long interval, was of a totally different nature from those that preceded it. The love that it breathes is not of an earthly, but a heavenly nature; and its incidents consist not in the adventures of heroes, but the sufferings of martyrs.

In the times which succeeded the earliest ages of Christianity, the spirit of the new religion appears to have been but imperfectly understood by many of the most zealous of its ministers; and it is to the dispassionate investigation of modern times, that we are indebted for the restoration of its primitive simplicity and purity.

As the first corruption of the doctrines of Christianity was owing to the eastern gnostics, so, with the *Therapeutae*, and other oriental sects, originated the notion so fatal to the practice of genuine religion, that the rejection of the Creator's bounties in this world, is the best title to an immeasurable beatitude in the next.

With a view of promoting a taste for monastic seclusion, St John of Damascus (a pious monk of Syria, who lived in the 8th century, during the reign of the emperor Leo Isauricus,) appears to have written his *Lives of Barlaam and Josaphat*.¹

This story, which is supposed to be the model of our spiritual romances, is said, and with some probability, to be founded in truth; though the prophetic orthodoxy of Damascenus has anticipated discussions which were not agitated for centuries after the era of his saints.

The tale in itself is, to a carnal mind, destitute of interest. Martyrs and magicians, theological arguments and triumphs over infidelity, alternately occupy the narrator, while Satan and his agents lie in wait for every opportunity to entrap the unwary Neophytes.

The style of the work is formed on the sacred writings, and it is not altogether without reason that the origin of spiritual romance has been traced to the apocryphal books of Scripture. The long discourses of Barlaam abound with parabolical allusions—in agreeable and ingenious similitudes. Indeed, in so long a composition, and of such a species, it is surprising that the author should have

¹ Appendix, No. VI.

contrived so much to enliven the dialogue, and render it so little tedious.

When the Christian religion had spread abroad in Egypt, and the fame of the sanctity of its teachers reached even to India, where many relinquishing their property, dedicated themselves to the solitary worship of God, there reigned in the east a certain king, named Abenner. This personage was distinguished by the elegance of his form, and success in war, but darkened his other bright qualities by a superstitious regard to idols. All things prospered under his hands, and the want of children alone appears to have reminded him of the inadequacy of his power for securing happiness.

In the midst of this prosperity, Abenner was annoyed by the troops of monks and Christians, who, by their zeal in preaching, brought over from the worship of idols many of the most considerable nobles of the country. Enraged at this defection, and unacquainted with the truth of the doctrines disseminated, the king instituted a grievous persecution against all who professed the new religion. Many of the ordinary worshippers tottered in their faith; but the monastic class, by suffering martyrdom, enjoyed a glorious opportunity of showing their zeal. A distinguished satrap, moreover, unterrified by the sufferings of the Christians, embraced

the occasion for declaring his conversion, and in an elaborate speech endeavoured to seduce the king. His majesty, however, with a rare forbearance, dismissed him, without conferring the crown of martyrdom; but, as a testimony of the inefficacy of his preaching, increased the rigour of his persecution, and bestowed new honours on the worshippers of idols.

After these aberrations a son is born to Abenner, of singular beauty; overjoyed by the accomplishment of his strongest wish, he proclaims a great festival, and assembles about fifty of the most eminent of the astrologers skilled in the learning of the Chaldeans. These sages give their opinion that the young prince would surpass in wealth, power, and glory, all his predecessors. Daniel alone of their number foretells his distinguished zeal for the Christian religion, and declares that the glory to which he was destined was reserved for him in another and a better world.

The king, dismayed by this prophecy, bethinks himself of human means to avert its completion. For this purpose he builds a splendid palace, in which he places his son, where, by providing him with teachers and servants of the most healthy and beautiful appearance, he is careful that no symptoms of death, or disease, or poverty, or any thing

that could molest him, should fall under his observation.

After these arrangements, so well calculated for the good education of a young prince, finding that some of the monks still survived, Abenner renews the persecution, and on two of their number he bestows the crown of martyrdom, which indeed they appear to have eagerly solicited.

In the mean time Prince Josephat waxed strong, and, possessing great ingenuity, and a prodigious love of learning, gives much disquietude to his teachers, whom he frequently puzzles by his questions.

Notwithstanding the anxiety of the king, to keep the mind of his son unacquainted with every idea productive of pain, the irksomeness of his confinement, and a desire to learn its cause, harass and distress him. Having, therefore, persuaded one of his attendants to inform him of the prediction of the astrologer, and the cause of the persecution of the Christians, he obtains permission from the king to leave his prison; and in spite of the vigilance of those about him, to remove all unseemly objects from his sight, he gradually acquires the ideas of disease and of death.

In these days the word of God came to Barlaam, a pious monk, who dwelt in the wilderness of Sen-

naar, and moved him to attempt the conversion of Josaphat. Having, therefore, girt himself with worldly vesture, he journeyed, in the disguise of a merchant, towards India, till he arrived at the residence of the young prince. Here he insinuated himself into the acquaintance of the attendant who had revealed to Josaphat the prediction of the astrologer. He informed this person that he wished to present to the prince a gem which was of great price, and was endowed with many virtues. Under this similitude of a worldly jewel, he typified the beauties of the gospel; and the prince having heard the story of the merchant, ordered him to be instantly introduced. Barlaam having thus gained admittance, premises his instructions with a summary of sacred history, from the fall of Adam to the resurrection of our Saviour; and, having in this way excited the attention and curiosity of Josaphat, who conjectures that this is the jewel of the merchant, he gradually proceeds to unfold all the mysteries and inculcate all the *credenda* of Christianity.

The sacrament of baptism, and the communion of bread and wine—faith—works—and the resurrection, with all the various topics such subjects involve, are successively expounded and illustrated. The prince yields implicit assent to the doctrines

of Barlaam, and is admitted to a knowledge of all the questions which agitated the church in these early periods.

The consideration of the seclusion of the monks, and the efficacy of retirement in withdrawing their minds from this world, with a warm eulogy on this species of martyrdom, prepare the way for Barlaam to throw off the terrestrial habiliments of the merchant, and to appear before his pupil in all the luxury of spiritual cleanness. An ancient goat-skin (from the effect of the sun, almost incorporated with his fleshless bones,) served him as a shirt, a rough and ragged hair-cloth descended from his loins to his knees, and a cloak of the same texture suspended from his shoulders composed the upper garment of this disciple of St Anthony.

Unappalled by the horror of this picture, Josaphat entreats the monk to release him from his confinement, and to accept him as his companion in the desert; but is dissuaded by the prudence of Barlaam, who fears that, by the failure of such a premature step, he might be debarred from the completion of his pious work.

Having, therefore, baptized Josaphat, and left him his leathern doublet and hair-cloth as memorials of his conversion, and to ward off the attacks of Satan, he departs to the deserts after a profu-

sion of prayer for the prince's perseverance in well-doing.

During his absence, Josaphat continues to manifest his zeal by every kind of mortification and prayer. Unfortunately, however, Zardan, one of his attendants, who was apprized of his conversion, uneasy at the neglect of his trust, reveals to the king the visits of Barlaam.

Forthwith Abenner, being grievously enraged and troubled, betakes himself to Arachis, a celebrated astrologer, to whom he discovers the lamentable predicament of his son.

Arachis soon restores composure to the king, by proposing two expedients for the removal of this grievance. The first of these was to lay hold of Barlaam, and, by threatening the torture, to compel him to confess the falsehood of his doctrine. Should Barlaam escape them, he next proposed to persuade Nachor, an ancient *mathematician*, who had a strong resemblance to the monk, to allow himself to be discomfited in a disputation on the truth of Christianity; by which means he expects that Josaphat will without difficulty come over to the triumphant party.

In their endeavours to overtake Barlaam the Impious are unsuccessful; but the king again suf-

fers his wrath against the monks to overpower his humanity, and seventeen of them, who refuse with many contemptuous reproaches to discover the retreat of Barlaam, are tortured and put to death.

Recourse was now had to the second expedient of Arachis, who, having arranged matters with Nachor, gives out that he had got hold of Barlaam; and the king having proclaimed an amnesty, invites the Christians, with all the most learned of the heathen, to be present at a public disputation with the hermit, on the merits of the new faith.

The invitation to the Christians, however, appears not to have been accepted, for, with the exception of Barachias, (who will appear in a still more dignified situation hereafter,) no one comes forward in behalf of the pretended Barlaam. Spite of this untoward circumstance, the false Barlaam, like the celebrated Balaam of old, instead of cursing the king's enemies, blesses them altogether. The menaces of Josaphat, who, having discovered the imposition, threatened to tear out the heart and tongue of Nachor with his own hands, should he be overcome in the argument, appear to have operated on him as the flaming sword of the angel on the prudent and patient monitor of Balaam.

However this may be, to the astonishment and displeasure of Abenner, Nachor, in his reply to the idolaters, proves the errors of their tenets, and the divine nature of Christianity.

Dividing the different religions into three classes, the worship of the gods, the Jewish faith, and the belief in Christ, he exposes the absurdity of the two first, and concludes his harangue by an exposition of the superiority of the New Religion. All this the Magi are unable to refute, and the king, after many vain attempts to remind Nachor of his instructions, is obliged to dissolve the assembly, with the intention of renewing the conference on the following day. Josaphat, however, in the course of the night completes the conversion of Nachor, who betakes himself in the morning to the wilderness, to work out his salvation in private.

When these things come to the knowledge of the king, he is as usual much irritated; and the prudent monks being no longer exposed to his resentment, his wise men and astrologers are flogged, and dismissed with disgrace. But, spite of these tokens of impartiality, his time was not yet come, though he no longer offers sacrifice to the gods, nor holds their ministers in honour.

The servants of the idols perceiving the estrangement of the king, and fearing the loss of the

offerings he was wont to make to the gods, call to their aid Theudas, a celebrated magician, by whose instigation Abenner is again induced to interfere with the tranquillity of his son.

Presuming on the influence of the sexual passion, Abenner, by the advice of Theudas, orders the attendants of the prince to be removed, and in their room damsels of the most alluring beauty are placed about him. Josaphat appears to have borne their assaults with wonderful fortitude, though the proceedings of one of them were so violent, that the pious Damascenus ascribes them to the operation of demons, who were understood by the primitive Christians to be the authors and patrons of idolatry.

A more dangerous trial, however, is yet reserved for Josaphat. The most beautiful of his maiden attendants was a young princess, a captive of Abenner. In this damsel the prince takes a peculiar interest, and, reflecting on her misfortunes, he uses every endeavour to solace her by conversion to Christianity. Instigated by the demons, she promises to assent to this change of religion, on condition that the prince should espouse her; and on his declining a tie incompatible with his vow of celibacy, she labours to convince him of its inno-

cence, supporting her arguments by the example of the patriarchs, and others distinguished by their piety. Josaphat, however, is determined against this formal breach of his engagements; and the princess is at length compelled to promise that she will embrace Christianity on more moderate terms. This was too much for the piety of Josaphat to resist, and the glory of redeeming the soul of the damsel, appeared to him to atone for the corporeal defilement, on which she insisted as a preliminary.

At this perilous crisis, and when the princess seems to have been on the brink of conversion, Josaphat bethinks himself of prayer. At the same period likewise, the demons (as afterwards appeared from their own confession,) had been put to flight by a sign of the cross which the prince had fortunately made, and thus left him to combat with his earthly antagonist alone.

The scheme of the idolaters having thus failed, and the princess being abandoned to virginity and reprobation, Theudas attempts in a conference to shake the faith of Josaphat; but the latter victoriously converts the magician, and sends him like Nachor to the desert, where he is baptized, and passes the remainder of his life in tears and groans, and in producing other fruits of repentance.

The king at length determines no longer to harass his son on the score of religion; but, by the advice of Arachis, divides his kingdom with him, in the hope that the cares of government may withdraw him from his ascetic habits.

The first use Josaphat makes of his newly-acquired power, is to erect the cross on every tower of the city where he dwells, while the temples and altars of the idols are levelled with the dust; he also builds a magnificent cathedral to our Saviour, where he preaches the gospel to his subjects, calls many from darkness to light, and distributes his treasures among the poor. Now God (says the pious author of the history,) was with him whithersoever he walked, and all that he did prospered under his hands; but it was not so with the household of Abenner, which daily waxed weaker and weaker.

The king, presuming that this distinction would not have been made without a cause, at length allows himself to be converted by Josaphat; whose spiritual son he thus becomes, to the unutterable edification and comfort of the monks; and then retires from the government of his kingdom to a solitary place, where he gives up the ghost after a long course of penitence and mortification.

Josaphat being now left without check, resolves

to retire from the world, and to pass the remainder of his days with Barlaam in the desert. Having, therefore, harangued his people, and compelled Barachias, the person who stood forward to defend the false Barlaam, to ascend the vacant throne, much against the inclination of the prince elect, he escapes with some difficulty from his subjects.

After a painful pilgrimage of many days, in the course of which he meets with numberless demons, tempting him sometimes in the form of springs of water, and sometimes in the less acceptable shape of wild beasts and serpents, he arrives at the cell of Barlaam.

There, after a due preparation by devout exercises, the old man dies, and is buried by Josaphat, who spends thirty-five years in supplications to heaven, for a speedy removal from this life. The holy men of these times indeed appear to have passed their existence, as if they had been brought into this world only for the purpose of praying for their deliverance from it.

The prayers of Josaphat are at length heard, and he is buried by a neighbouring hermit in the grave of Barlaam.

When the account of his demise reaches his successor, Barachias, he comes with a great retinue

to the desert ; and having raised the bodies of Josaphat and Barlaam, which he finds perfectly entire, and (which could not have been expected in the lifetime of the saints,) emitting a most grateful odour, he transports them to his metropolis. There they are deposited in a magnificent church, in which they continued to work miracles, as they had done in the course of their journey, and before they were again interred.

Damascenus feigns that the incidents of the story of Josaphat and Barlaam had been told to him by some pious Ethiopians, by which he means Indians, who had found them related by means of engravings on tablets of unsuspected veracity.

This romance was a great favourite during the middle ages, and was the origin of the celebrated Arabic story of Ebn-Tophail. In a more recent period it gave rise, as shall be afterwards shown, to more than one of the tales of Boccaccio ; and it was unquestionably the model of that species of spiritual fiction which was so prevalent in France during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Josaphat and Barlaam, however, was the last example of this mode of composition, which appeared during the existence of the eastern empire ; the only Greek romance by which it was succeed-

ed; being formed on the model of Theagenes and Chariclea, or rather of the Clitophon and Leucippe. Indeed, in this last and feeble example of Grecian fiction, we seldom meet with an incident of which we have not the prototype in the romances of Heliodorus or Tatius. It is entitled *Ismene and Ismenias*,¹ and was written by Eustathius, or Eumathius, as he has been sometimes called, who flourished, as Huet terms it, in the 12th century, during the reign of the emperor Emanuel Comnenus. The commencement of the story, and the mode in which the hero and heroine become acquainted, is evidently taken from Heliodorus. Ismenias is sent as a herald from his native city, Eurycomis, for the performance of some annual ceremony, to Aulycomis, where he is hospitably entertained by Sosthenes, the father of Ismene. This young lady is seized with a passion for the herald, on seeing him for the first time at dinner; she presses his hand, makes love to him under shelter of the table, and at length proceeds so far that Ismenias bursts into laughter. Heliodorus has painted his Arsace, and Tatius his Melite, as women of this description; but Eustathius is the first who has introduced his

¹ Ευσταθίου καθ' Ὑσμινίαν καὶ, Ὑσμινίη δράμα.

heroine making love without modesty and without art. To her advances Ismenias at length makes some return, and the period of his embassy being expired, he departs to his native place, Eurycomis, accompanied by Sosthenes, and his daughter Ismene, whom he entertains in his father's house. One day, at dinner, Sosthenes accidentally mentions that his daughter is speedily to be married. Ismene, who appears to have been previously unacquainted with this projected change in her situation, insists, in the course of the following night, on an immediate elopement with Ismenias. She dragged me along, (says Ismenias, who narrates the story,) nor would she quit her hold, though I affirmed that the things necessary for her departure were not prepared. I with difficulty, at length, escaped from her hands, calling all the gods to witness.—Ismenias, however, on leaving her, does not go to prepare for the elopement, but to sleep; which, indeed, is the constant resource of the hero of this romance in every emergency. Throughout the whole work he consults his pillow, in circumstances which should have converted a sleeper of Ephesus into an Argus. At length, by the exertions of Cratiathenes, the friend of Ismenias, a vessel is procured, in which the lovers embark. A storm having arisen, and a vic-

tim being thought necessary by the sailors to appease Neptune, the lot falls on Ismene, who is accordingly thrown overboard. The wind, of course, is allayed; but as the lover of Ismene disturbs the crew with his lamentations, he is set on shore on the coast of Ethiopia. After being thus disembarked he experiences the usual adventures with pirates, and is at last sold as a slave at Daphnopolis, to a Greek master; who soon after goes as herald to another city in Greece, and carries Ismenias along with him. The herald and his slave are received in the house of Sostratus, where Ismenias discovers Ismene, living in a servile condition. When thrown into the sea, she had been preserved by the exertions of a dolphin, and had afterwards been sold by pirates to Sostratus. This gentleman, with his daughter, and also Ismene, attend the master of Ismenias to Daphnopolis. In the middle of the night, which followed their arrival in that city, the whole band proceed to worship in the temple of Apollo. Here the father and mother of Ismenias, and the parents of Ismene, are discovered tearing their hair, and lamenting in full chorus. The lovers are recognised by their parents, and redeemed from servitude, after the heroine has been subjected to a trial of chastity.

In this romance, which consists of eleven books,

no distressing incident (except indeed to the reader,) occurs till the sixth, in which Ismene's intended marriage is first alluded to by her father. The five preceding books present one continued scene of jollity, and the long descriptions of festivity are seldom interrupted, except by still longer accounts of dreams, which are represented as having been infinitely more agreeable than could be expected, from the loaded stomachs of the sleepers. As the work advances, these dreams become quite ridiculous, from their accurate minuteness, and the long reasonings carried on in them by persons whose stock of logic, even when awake, does not appear to have been very extensive.

The story of Ismene and Ismenias is not intricate in itself, but is perplexed by the similarity of names. The reader must be far advanced in the work before he learns to distinguish the hero from the heroine; especially as the latter acts a part which in most romances is assigned to the former. Eurycomis is the city from which Ismenias is sent as herald. In Aulycomis he is received by Sosthenes, the father of Ismene; and is sold to a Greek master at Daphnopolis, who goes as herald to Artycomis, where he is entertained by Sostatus. Eustathius has perhaps fallen into this

blemish by imitating Heliodorus, in whose romance Chaereas, Calasiris, and Cnemon, are the names of the principal characters.

Eustathius resembles the author of Clitophon and Leucippe, in his fondness for descriptions of paintings. The second and fourth books are full of accounts of allegorical pictures in the temples and summer-house of the garden of Sosthenes, which were hung with representations of the four cardinal virtues, and also with emblems of each of the twelve months of the year. A reaper is drawn for July; a person bathing for August; and one sitting by the fire for February. Some of these allegories, however, are rather far-fetched; thus it is not very apposite to make a soldier the emblem of March, because that month is the most favourable for military expeditions. From Tatius also the author of *Ismene* and *Ismenias* borrows that ticklish experiment, which winds up the fable of so many of the Greek romances, with such honour to the heroines, and such satisfaction to their lovers. From Longus, according to Huet, he has taken that celebrated piece of gallantry,² which consists in drinking from the part of

² *Elegans urbanitatis genus.*—*Huet. Orig. Fab.*

a goblet which had been touched by the lips of a mistress. But this artifice, which has been introduced in so many amatory compositions,¹ may be traced much higher than the *Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus. Lucian, in one of his dialogues,² makes Jupiter pay this compliment to Ganymede; and the same conceit may be found in a collection of letters by the sophist Philostratus, who wrote in the second century. "Drink to me," says he, "with thine eyes only, or if thou wilt, putting the cup to thy lips, fill it with kisses, and so bestow it upon me."³

On account of his numerous plagiarisms, Eustathius is violently attacked by Huet, who says that he rather transcribes than imitates the work of Tatius. "Indeed," continues he, "there can be no-

¹ Ac. Tatius. Ovid de Art. Amat. lib. I. 575.

² Dialog. Deor. vol. I. p. 129.

³ Εμὰ δὲ μύθοις πρόπινα τοῖς ὀμμασιν. Ἐὶ δὲ βύλῃ τοῖς χεῖλεσι προσφίεσσα πλὴν φιλημάτων τὸ ἔκπωμα, καὶ ἔτως δίδου, 24. This idea, along with many other far-fetched conceits of Philostratus, has been imitated by Ben Jonson, in his poem entitled the Forest:—

" Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine."

thing more stigid than this romance, nothing meaner, nothing more unpleasant and disgusting. In the whole there is no decency, no probability, no invention, no happy disposition of incident. The author introduces the hero relating his own adventures; but one cannot discover whom he addresses, or why he is discoursing. Ismene is first enamoured, she first confesses and offers love without modesty, without shame, and without art. Ismenias takes no hint from these carresses, nor does he make any return. This may be praise-worthy in morals or philosophy, but is wretched in romance. In short, the whole is the work of some raw school-boy, or unskilful sophist, from whose hands the birch ought never to have been withdrawn."

These remarks of Huet may in general be well founded, but his censure of Eustathius for not having created a character to whom the hero recounts his history would be applicable, if just, not only to the work he criticises, but to many of the best of our modern novels and romances. The method adopted by Achilles Tatius, of introducing a listener, seems now exploded; and if we fancy that the hero or heroine speak, the narration must be regarded as a soliloquy from beginning to end. But in fact, in the modern novel, and in the Greek

romance of Ismene and Ismenias, the persons who relate their story are neither conceived to address a friend, nor to report their adventures to themselves, but are supposed to have written what the reader peruses.

Notwithstanding all its defects, *Ismene and Ismenias* has been imitated by subsequent poets and writers of romance. D'Urfé, in particular, has taken the description of the fountain of love introduced in the *Astrea*, from that of Diana at Artymis; and many of the incidents and names in the work of Eustathius have been transferred to the pastoral of Montemayor.

Besides those Greek romances that have been enumerated, there is one entitled *Dosicles and Rhodantes*, by Theodorus Prodromus, who wrote about the middle of the 12th century, and was nearly contemporary with Eustathius, but which shall not be farther mentioned; as besides being very indifferently written, it is in iambics, and is rather a poem than a romance. It was followed by a great many others of a similar description, in the 12th and 13th centuries, all of which are written in iambics; and contain a series of wandering adventures, strung together with little art or invention, as the loves of Charicell and Drosilla, by Nicetas Eugenianus, &c.

During the existence of the eastern empire, there also appeared a number of Greek tales, chiefly derived from mythological stories, and resembling those of Parthenius Nicenus ; but sometimes combined with long discussions on the nature of love. However, as these are not written according to the rules of romance, but are founded on heathen fables, they are not included in the plan that I have adopted.

A curious account is given by Huet, of a romance of disputed authenticity, which appeared under the name of Athenagoras, entitled, *Du Vrai et parfait Amour*. A copy of this work, written in French, was sent, in the year 1569, to M. Lamané, by Martin Fumée, who professes himself to be merely the translator. He informs us in the preface that he received the Greek copy from this M. Lamané, who was prothonotary to the cardinal of Armagnac ; that he had never seen any other manuscript of the work, and adds, that it is the production of that Athenagoras, who addressed an apology for the Christian religion to the emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, which would make him contemporary with, or even prior to, Heliodorus. In 1599, thirty years after it was written or translated by Fumée, the romance was published by Bernard of Sanjorry, with a preface,

in which he says that he had found among his papers a copy of the work, transcribed from the manuscript which Fumée had sent to M. de Lamané.

Huet speaks of this romance at considerable length, in the work I have so often quoted. He in the first place extols the splendid and interesting manner in which the romance opens. "There," says he, "as in a picture, is represented the lofty triumph of Paulus Emilius, where, amidst so many remarkable objects, the king of Macedon is exhibited loaded with chains, and hurried along with his children before the chariot of his conqueror. There the enamoured Charis, grieving beyond measure that she had fallen into the power of the Romans, and that she had been torn from Theogenes, her lover, is touched with delight, on unexpectedly beholding him; and at the same moment is affected with the most poignant anguish, because she sees him among the captives." It is from the house of Octavius, a Roman general, into whose power she had fallen, that Charis views the triumph that excites such jarring emotions. Melangenias, who turns out to be an elderly gentlewoman of Carthage, but was at that time the slave of Octavius, is sent to console her. These two females recount to each other their early loves and misfortunes, the recital of which occupies the first six books of

the romance, and the remaining four contain the adventures of Charis after she had obtained her freedom from Octavius, which are in the usual style of those contained in the Greek romances.

As to the question of the authenticity of this production, the authors of the *Bibliothèque des Romains* seem to think it a genuine work, but do not enter into much discussion. Huet remarks that the intimate knowledge shown by the author, of all those things which were discovered by the ancients, both in nature and art;—his wonderful acquaintance with the history of past times, and the ancient errors he adopts, into which a modern would scarcely have fallen; the Greek phraseology which shines even through the mist of translation; and, above all, the dignity and grace of antiquity, which cannot be easily imitated, and in which the whole work is clothed; all conspire to vindicate from the suspicion of forgery. The bishop then proceeds to unfold his arguments against the genuineness of the work, many of which are not more conclusive than those adduced in favour of its authenticity. The first reason for incredulity is, that the romance has not been mentioned in the dictionary of Photius, which, if admitted as a proof of fabrication, would render spurious the romances of Longus, Chariton, and the three Xe-

nophons. Nor is the argument derived from the supposed imitation of Heliodorus much more conclusive.

The imposture, however, is clearly detected by the description of manners and institutions unknown in the age of Athenagoras. The author conducts a criminal trial in the heart of Greece, according to the form of process before the parliament of Paris. The priests and virgins introduced in the romance, as consecrated to Hammon, live according to the fashion of the monks and nuns of the fifteenth century, and not like those who existed in the early ages of Christianity.

Huet has mentioned as the principal defect of the romance, that it is loaded with descriptions of buildings, and that the palaces are not raised by the magic hand of fiction, but by a professional architect. From this blemish Huet has drawn his chief argument against the authenticity of the work. "It is universally known," says he, "that the Cardinal Arnagnac was much addicted to the study of architecture: Philander, the commentator on Vitruvius, was one of his most devoted retainers, was the most scientific architect of his age, and was, besides, well informed in every branch of polite literature. Now, since the descriptions of this Athenagoras are closely squared to the prin-

ciples of architecture inculcated by him in his annotations on Vitruvius, may it not be reasonably suspected, that Philander was the deviser of this literary imposture, in order to support his own opinions by the authority of antiquity. The fraud might have been detected, had the work issued from the hands of Philander, or the palace of the cardinal. That he might remove suspicion from himself, and conduct the reader as it were to other ground, he wrote an amatory romance. There, as if incidentally, he inserted the precepts of his art, and, concealing his own name, he ingeniously employed that of Lamané, for the possessor of the manuscript, and Fumée for the French translator. However it may be," he continues, "the romance is ingeniously contrived, artfully conducted, enlightened with unparalleled sentiments, and precepts of morality, and adorned with a profusion of the most delightful images, most skilfully disposed. The incidents are probable, the episodes are deduced from the main subject, the language is perspicuous, and modesty is scrupulously observed. Here there is nothing mean, nothing unnatural or affected, nothing that has the appearance of childishness or sophistry." Huet, however, complains that the conclusion of the fable of this romance is far removed from the excellence of the introduction.

I have now taken a successive view of the Greek romances, and have attempted to furnish such an analysis of them as may enable the reader to form some notion of their nature and qualities.

One quality, it is obvious, pervades them all, and it is the characteristic not only of Greek romance, but of the first attempt at prosaic fiction in every country. This is making the interest of the work consist in a succession of strange, and often improbable, adventures. Indeed, as the primary object of the narrator was to surprise by the incidents he rehearsed, the strangeness of these was the chief object to which he directed his attention. For the creation of these marvels sufficient scope was given him, because, as little intercourse took place in society, the limits of probability were not precisely ascertained. The seclusion, also, of females in these early times gave a certain uniformity to existence, and prevented the novelist from painting those minute and almost imperceptible traits of feeling and character; all those developements, which render a well-written modern novel so agreeable and interesting. Still, amid all their imperfections, the Greek romances are extremely pleasing, since they may be considered as almost the first productions in which

woman is in any degree represented as assuming her proper station of the friend and the companion of man. Hitherto she had been considered almost in the light of a slave, ready to bestow her affections on whatever master might happen to obtain her ; but, in Heliodorus and his followers, we see her an affectionate guide and adviser—we behold an union of hearts painted as a main-spring of our conduct in life—we are delighted with pictures of fidelity, constancy, and chastity, and are encouraged to persevere in a life of virtue by the happy consequences to which it leads. The Greek romances are less valuable than they might have been, from giving too much to adventure, and too little to manners and character ;—but these have not been altogether neglected, and several pleasing pictures are delineated of ancient customs and feelings. In short, these early fictions are such as might have been expected at the first effort, and must be considered as not merely valuable in themselves, but as highly estimable in pointing out the method of awaking the most pleasing sympathies of our nature, and affecting most powerfully the fancy and the heart.

CHAPTER II.

Introduction of the Milesian Tales into Italy.

—*Latin Romances.—Petronius Arbiter.—
Apuleius, &c.*

THE Milesian Fables had found their way into Italy even before they flourished in Greece. They had been received with eagerness, and imitated by the Sybarites, the most voluptuous nation in the west of Europe; whose stories obtained the same celebrity in Rome, that the Milesian tales had acquired in Asia and in Greece. It is not easy to specify the exact nature of the western imitations, but if we may judge from a solitary specimen transmitted by Ælian, they were of a facetious description, and intended to promote merriment. They enjoyed great popularity for a long period, and at length, in the time of Sylla, the Milesian tales of Aristidis were translated into Latin by Sisenna,

who was prætor of Sicily, and author of a history of Rome.

The taste for the Sybarite and Milesian fables increased during the reign of the emperors. Many imitators appeared, particularly Clodius Albinus, the competitor of the Emperor Severus, whose stories have not reached posterity, but are said to have obtained a celebrity to which their merit hardly entitled them.¹ It is strange that Severus, in a letter to the senate, in which he upbraids its members for the honours they had heaped on his rival, and the support they had given to his pretensions, should, amid accusations that concerned him more nearly, have expressed his chief mortification to arise from their having distinguished that person as learned, who had grown hoary in the study of old wives' tales, such as the Milesian-Punic fables. —Major fuit dolor, quod illum pro literato laudandum plerique duxistis, cum ille neniis quibusdam anilibus occupatus, inter Milesias Punicas Apuleii sui, et ludicra literaria consenesceret.

But the most celebrated fable of ancient Rome is the work of Petronius Arbiter, which is, perhaps, the most remarkable fiction which has dishonoured

¹ Milesias nonnulli ejusdem esse dicunt, quarum fama non ignobilis, quamvis mediocriter scriptæ sunt.—*Capitolinus vit. Clod. Albini.*

the literary history of any nation. It is the only fable of that period which remains, but is a strong proof of the monstrous corruption of the times in which such a production could be tolerated, though, no doubt, writings of bad moral tendency might be circulated before the invention of printing, without arguing the depravity they would have evinced, if presented to the world subsequent to that period.

The work of Petronius is in the form of a satire, and, according to some commentators, is directed against the vices of the court of Nero, who is thought to be delineated under the names of Trimalchio and Agamemnon ;—an opinion which has been justly ridiculed by Voltaire. The satire is written in a manner which was first introduced by Varro ; verses are intermixed with prose, and jests with serious remark. It has much the air of a romance, both in the incidents and their disposition ; but the story is too well known, and too scandalous to be particularly detailed. The scene is laid in Magna Græcia ; Encolpius is the chief character in the work, and the narrator of events ;—he commences by a lamentation on the decline of eloquence, and while listening to the reply of Agamemnon, a professor of oratory, he loses his companion Ascyltos. Wandering through the town

in search of him, he is finally conducted by an old woman to a retirement where the incidents that occur are analogous to the scene. The subsequent adventures—the feast of Trimalchio—the defection and return of Giton—the amour of Eumolpus in Bythia—the voyage in the vessel of Lycus—the passion and disappointment of Circe follow each other without much art of arrangement; an apparent defect which may arise from the mutilated form in which the satire has descended to us.

The style of Petronius has been much applauded for its elegance—it certainly possesses considerable *naïveté* and grace, and is by much too fine a veil for so deformed a body. Some of the verses also are extremely beautiful; the episode of the Matron of Ephesus is well known, it has been frequently imitated, and is perhaps the best part of Petronius.

Indeed, the Latin writers of fiction seem to have been uniformly more happy in their episodes than in the principal subject. This remark is particularly applicable to the

ASS OF APULEIUS,

To which its readers, on account of its excellence,

added the epithet of Golden. The Milesian fables were much in vogue in the age of the author. Accordingly, in the commencement of his work, he allures his readers with the promise of a fashionable composition,¹ though he early insinuates that he has deeper intentions than their amusement.

The fable is related in the person of the author, who commences his story with representing himself as a young man, sensible of the advantages of virtue, but immoderately addicted to pleasure, and curious of magic. He informs the reader that on account of some domestic affairs, he was obliged to travel into Thessaly, the country whence his family had its origin. At his entrance into one of the towns, called Hypata, he enquired for a person of the name of Milon, and being directed to his house, rapped at the door. On what security do you intend to borrow, said a servant, cautiously unbolting it; we only lend on pledges of gold or silver;—being at last introduced to the master, Apulsius presented letters of recommendation from Demas, a friend of the miser, and was in consequence asked to remain in the house. Milon having dismissed his wife, desired his guest to sit

¹ At ego tibi sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conseram, auresque tuas benevolas lepido susurro permulceam.

down on the couch in her place, apologizing for the want of seats of a more portable description, on account of his fear of robbers. Apuleius having accepted the invitation to reside in the miser's house, went out to the public bath, and on the way reflecting on the parsimony of his host, he bought some fish for supper. On coming out from the market he met Pithias, who had been his school-fellow at Athens, but was at that time ædile of Hypata, and had the superintendence of provisions. This magistrate having examined the fish his friend had purchased, condemned them as bad, ordered them to be destroyed, and having merely reprimanded the vender, left his old companion dismayed at the loss of his supper and money, and by no means satisfied with the mode of administering justice in Thessaly.

After having visited the bath, Apuleius returned to sleep at Milon's, and rose next morning with the design of seeing whatever was curious in the city. Thessaly was the country whence magic had its origin; and of the nature of this art he had heard and even witnessed something on his journey from Rome. Hence he imagined that every thing he saw was changed from its natural form, by the force of enchantment; he expected to behold the

statues walk, and to hear the oxen prophecy. While roaming through the town he met with a lady, called Byrrhena, who had been a friend of his mother, and who invited him to lodge at her house. This he could not agree to, as he had already accepted an apartment at Milon's, but he consented to accompany her home to supper. The great hall in this lady's palace is splendidly described, and an animated account is given of a statue of Victory, and a piece of sculpture representing Diana, surrounded by her dogs. Apuleius is warned by Byrrhena to beware of Pamphile, the wife of Milon, who was the most dangerous magician in Thessaly. She informs him that this hag spares no charms to fascinate a young man for whom she conceives a passion, and does not scruple to metamorphose those who oppose her inclinations. Apuleius returned home, hesitating whether to attach himself to Pamphile, in order to be instructed in magic, or to her servant Fotis. The superior beauty of the latter speedily fixed his resolution, and he consoled himself for the many privations he endured in the house of Milon, by carrying on an intrigue with this damsel, who acted as the handmaid of Pamphile, and the valet of her parsimonious husband.

One night while supping at the house of Byr-

rhena, Apuleius was informed that the following day is the festival of Momus, and that he ought to honour that divinity by some merry invention.

Returning home somewhat intoxicated, he perceived through the dusk three large figures attacking the door of Milon with much fury. Suspecting them to be robbers, who intended to break into the house, he run his sword through them in succession, and leaving them as dead, escaped into the house. Next morning he is arrested on account of the triple homicide, and is brought to trial in a crowded and open court. The accuser is called by a herald. An old man, who acted in this capacity, pronounced a harangue, of which the duration was limited by a clepsydra, as the old sermons were measured by hour glasses. Two women in deep mourning were introduced; one lamented the death of her husband, the other of her son, and both called loudly for vengeance on the murderer. Apuleius was found guilty of the death of three citizens; but previous to his execution it is resolved he should be put to the torture, to force him to a discovery of his accomplices, and the necessary preparations are accordingly completed. What had chiefly astonished Apuleius during this scene, was, that the whole court, and among others his host Milon, were all the while convulsed with

laughter. One of the women in mourning now demanded that the dead bodies, which were in court, should be uncovered, in order that the compassion of the judges being excited, the tortures might be increased. This demand was complied with, and the task assigned to Apuleius himself. The risibility of the audience is now accounted for, as he sees, to his utter astonishment, three immense leather bottles, which, on the preceding night, he had mistaken for robbers. The imaginary criminal is then dismissed, after being informed that this mock trial was in honour of the god Momus.

On returning home the matter was more fully explained by Fotis, who informs Apuleius that she had been employed by her mistress to procure the hair of a young Bœotian, of whom she was enamoured, in order to prepare a charm which would bring him to her house: that having failed in obtaining this ingredient, and fearing the resentment of her mistress, she had brought her some goat's hair, which fell from the scissors of a bottle-shearer. These hairs being burned by the sorceress, with the usual incantations, had (instead of leading the Bœotian to her house,) given animation to the skins to which they formerly adhered, and which being then in the form of bottles, had, in their desire of entrance, seemed to assault the door of Milon.

Apuleius agreed to forgive Fotis the uneasiness she had occasioned, if she would promise to exhibit her mistress to him while engaged in one of her magical operations. On the following night Fotis came to him in great agitation, and informed him her mistress was about to assume the shape of a bird, to fly to some object of her affections. Looking through an opening in the door, he saw Pamphile take out several bottles, and rub herself with an ointment contained in one of them. Then having muttered certain words, her body is covered with feathers, her nails are lengthened into claws; and forthwith, in shape of an owl, she flies out of the chamber. Apuleius next requested Fotis that she would favour him with some of the ointment, that he might follow her mistress in the same form, to his restoration from which he understood nothing farther was necessary than a draught of spring water mixed with anise and laurel leaves. Fotis, however, gave him a different ointment from that which she had intended, so that instead of being changed into a bird, he assumed the figure of an Ass. In this shape he retains his former feelings and understanding, but is told by Fotis that he cannot be restored to the human form but by eating rose leaves.

The remainder of the story is occupied with the

search of Apuleius after this valuable article, and the hardships he suffers under the degraded form to which he was reduced; a part of the work, which seems in its literal signification to have suggested the idea of such compositions as the *Adventures of a Lap-dog*, the *Perambulations of a Mouse*, &c.

Apuleius in the first place descended to the stable, where he was very roughly treated by his own horse, and the ass of Milon. In a corner of his new habitation he perceived the shrine of Hippo-na, the goddess of stables, adorned with fresh gathered roses; but in attempting to pluck them he was beat back with many blows by his own groom, who felt indignant at the meditated sacrilege.

At this instant Milon's dwelling was broken into by robbers, who, having pillaged the house, loaded the horse and the two asses which they found in the stable with the booty. Apuleius observed several rose bushes in a garden through which he passed on his way to the habitation of the banditti; but restrained himself from partaking of their flowers, lest he should be murdered by his new masters on resuming the human figure. After a long journey, and when almost ready to sink under the weight of his burden, he arrived at the abode of the robbers. This residence is described in a

manner extremely similar to the habitations of handitti, in all modern romances. We have the rugged mountain, impenetrable forest, inaccessible rocks, and even the solid and lofty tower, with the subterraneous cavern. In this frightful abode supper was served up by an old woman, who was the only domestic; and during the repast another troop arrived bearing a rich booty.

At day-break the robbers set out on a new expedition, and returned a few hours afterwards with a young lady as their prize, whom they consigned to the care of the old woman. She informed this bag that she had been carried off on the day of her nuptials with a young man, to whom she was much attached. The old woman, to alleviate her distress, entertained her with a story which she said was taken from the Milesian fables, and which is the celebrated tale of Cupid and Psyche.

Apuleius was employed in different expeditions with the robbers; he also made several attempts to escape from their power, which proved abortive. At length, one of their number, who had been left in the town where Milon resided, returned to his band, and informed them that they were not suspected of the robbery, which had been laid to the charge of a person of the name of Apuleius, who had forged letters from a friend of Milon, and

had disappeared after pillaging the house. He also introduced a stranger, who represents himself as the celebrated robber Hemus, the terror of all Thessaly; and who, of consequence, was gladly chosen the leader of the banditti. Apuleius, by attending to the conversation that passed between this person and the young lady, discovered that the pretended outlaw is her husband, who has assumed a false character, in order to effect her escape. This he accomplished one evening by intoxicating his companions, when having bound them with cords, and placed his bride on the back of Apuleius, he returned with her to the town in which she had formerly resided.

There is a striking coincidence of the occurrences at the habitation of the robbers with some of the early incidents in *Gil Blas*. The gloomy habitation of the robbers—the manner in which it is secured—the revelry of the banditti—the old woman by whom they are attended—the arrival of a new troop during the entertainment—the captivity of the young lady and final escape, are, I think, resemblances too strong to have been merely accidental.

The new master of Apuleius, in gratitude for the service he had rendered, determined he should be sent to his mares in the country, to aid in the

propagation of mules. Unfortunately the groom he was entrusted to had a wife, who totally marred the amorous expectations of Apuleius, by setting him to turn a mill. Nor was his situation improved when the groom, at length recollecting his orders, sent him on the mission to which he was originally destined; as he met with a most inhospitable reception from some horses who were his fellow suitors.

After this mortification, Apuleius was employed to bring burdens of wood from the mountains, under the guidance of a boy, who treated him with the utmost cruelty, and spread such a report of his mischievous disposition, that he was at the point of being for ever disqualified for the multiplication of mules. Intelligence, however, opportunely arrived that his master had been treacherously murdered by a former lover of his wife's, and that this lady, after taking a savage revenge on her perfidious admirer, had laid violent hands on herself. On receiving this intelligence, the groom pillaged his master's house in the country, loaded Apuleius with the booty, and fled with the rustics who were his accomplices. On their journey through a wild and desolate country, they met with various adventures; and at length arrived in a populous town,

where the groom resolved to fix his residence. Here Apuleius was purchased by an old eunuch, one of the priests of the Syrian goddess. While in his possession he was witness to the dreadful debaucheries of the ministers of that divinity; and, inadvertently braying with astonishment at their excesses, one of the neighbours who had lost an ass, burst into the house, which rendered public the infamy of these wretches.

In consequence of this exposure, the eunuchs were obliged to remove to another town, whither Apuleius, bearing the statue of the Syrian goddess, accompanied them. Here they lodged in the house of one of the inhabitants, who had a great veneration for that deity. A dog unfortunately ran off with a haunch of venison, with which he had intended to entertain her votaries. The cook proposed to hang himself in despair, but his wife persuaded him to leave that operation as his last resource; and meanwhile to substitute an ass's leg in room of the one he had lost. Apuleius having understood that he was the intended victim, rushed into the hall where the host was entertaining the priests, and overset the tables. A report having been circulated that a mad-dog had been seen in the stable, this act of Apuleius was ascri-

bed to hydrophobia ; and he would have been sacrificed to this suspicion, if he had not instantly drunk some water from a vase.

The eunuchs soon after removed, and in travelling about with them, Apuleius heard the recital of the tale concerning the tub which forms the second story of the seventh day of the Decameron. Apuleius at length was sold at the market of one of the towns through which he passed, to a baker, who meets with the adventure related by Boccaccio in the tenth novel of the fifth day. He next fell into the possession of a gardener, from whom he was forcibly carried off by a Roman soldier, and sold to two brothers who lived together ; the one being the cook, and the other the pastry-cook of a man of wealth and importance. When they went out they made it a rule to lock the door of the tent in which they baked, and dressed victuals, and left only their ass in it. At their return they invariably found that the pastry and other provisions had disappeared. As the ass always left his corn and hay unconsumed, he became an object of suspicion ; and being watched one day by the brothers, was detected at his dainty repast. The cooks are much entertained with the spectacle, and the account of this piece of epicurism having reached the ears of their master, Thyasus,

Apuleius was purchased by him, and taught a variety of tricks by one of the freedmen. The possession of this singular animal threw much lustre on the proprietor, in the estimation of his fellow-citizens, and he was in consequence appointed chief magistrate of Corinth for five consecutive years.

Apuleius was also of great value to the freedman who had charge of him, as he was exhibited for money to the inhabitants. He received besides frequent visits from ladies, which, at their solici- tation, he was privately sent to return.*

A splendid fete was now given by his master, in honour of his election to the magistracy. The judgment of Paris was represented, and Apuleius was destined to act a principal part in a species of afterpiece, which was by no means consonant to his feelings as a public exhibition.

He fled, unperceived, to the fields, and having gallopped for three leagues, he came to a retired place on the shore of the sea. The moon, which was in full splendour, and the awful silence of the

* See *La Pucelle*, chant. xx. note 4. "L'âne d'Apulée ne parla point; (says Voltaire,) il ne put jamais prononcer que *Oh* et *non*: mais il eut une bonne fortune avec une dame, comme on peut le voir dans l'Apuleius en deux volumes in 4^e *cum notis ad usum Delphini*.

night, inspired him with sentiments of devotion. He purified himself in the manner prescribed by Pythagoras, and addressed a long prayer to the great goddess Isis. In the course of the night she appeared to him in a dream; and, after giving a strange account of herself, announced to him the end of his misfortunes; but demanded, in return, the consecration of his whole life to her service. On awakening, he feels confirmed in the resolution of aspiring to a life of virtue. On this change of disposition, and conquest over his passions, the author finely represents all Nature as assuming a new face of cheerfulness and gaiety. "*Tanta hilaritudine, praeter peculiarem meam, gestire mihi cuncta videbantur, ut pecua etiam cujuscemodi, et totas domos, et ipsam diem serena facie gaudere sentirem.*"

While in this frame of mind, Apuleius perceived an innumerable multitude approaching the shore, to celebrate the festival of Isis. Amid the crowd of priests he remarked the sovereign pontiff, with a crown of roses on his head; and approached to pluck them. The pontiff, yielding to a secret inspiration, held forth the garland. Apuleius resumed his former figure, and the promise of the goddess was fulfilled. He was then initiated into her rites—returned to Rome, and devoted himself

to her service. This information, he remarks, will not surprise those who know that he is decurion of the temple of Osiris, and who are not ignorant that Isis and Osiris are the same divinity.

Apuleius was finally invited to a more mystic and solemn initiation, by the goddess herself, who rewarded him for his accumulated piety, by an abundance of temporal blessings.

Such is the general outline of the subject of the *Golden Ass*, which the contemporaries of the author, and the critics of the succeeding age, regarded as a trivial fable, written with the sole intention of amusing the vulgar. "*Quibus fabulis,*" says Macrobius, "*Apuleium nonnunquam lusisse miramur.*" At an early, though subsequent period, a very different opinion was adopted. It was no longer questioned that Apuleius had some profound intention; but it was not agreed in what his aim consisted. St Augustine permitted himself to doubt whether the account given by Apuleius of his change into an ass, was not a true relation. "*Aut indicavit,*" says he, "*aut finxit.*" The popular sentiment was, that the work was chiefly intended as a satire on the vices of the author's countrymen; and that, in imitation of a great predecessor, he had been anxious to particularize the maladies to which he wished to apply a remedy. Beroaldus, the

learned commentator on Apuleius, imagines the transformation into an ass, to signify that man becomes brutified when immersed in sensual pleasures; but that when roses are tasted, by which science and wisdom are typified, he returns to religion and virtue;—a change which is allegorically painted by a restoration to the human form.

In the Divine Légation of Moses, Dr Warburton has entered into much learned and ingenious, though often far-fetched speculation, on this subject. He introduces this topic, (which, at first sight, seems to bear a very remote analogy to the mission of the Jewish legislator,) while attempting to demonstrate that all nations have inculcated the general doctrine of a Providence, and the belief in a future state of rewards and punishments, by some circumstantial and popular method, as the Institution of Mysteries. He contends that the author had conceived an inveterate dislike to the Christian religion. He proves, from several passages in the Apology, another work of Apuleius, that his brother-in-law, by whom he was prosecuted on a charge of magic, was of this persuasion; and in the Golden Ass, the vices of the baker's wife are summed up, by informing us that she was a Christian;—hence his prepossession in favour of the pagan worship was increased, and he was induced to

compose a work for the express purpose of recommending this superstition, and an initiation into its mysteries, as a cure for all vices whatever. On this system the learned prelate proceeds to explain the prominent incidents of the romance. The ancients believed that a deliverance from a living death of brutality and vice, and a return to a new existence of virtue and happiness, which is the principal subject of the work, might be effected by initiation into the mysteries. Byrrhena is the representation of virtue; Apuleius refuses her invitation, and gives way to his passion for pleasure and magic, till the crimes and follies into which they lead him, end in his transformation to a brute; in which form every change of condition makes his situation more wretched and contemptible. The description of the enormities of the priests of Cybele, is intended as a contrast to the pure rites of Isis. Roses, by which the restoration to the human form is effected, was, among the ancients, a symbol of silence, the requisite quality of the initiated;—hence the statues of Isis were crowned with chaplets of these flowers, and the phrase, under the rose, has become in modern times proverbial. The solemn initiation, which is fully described, and the account of which concludes

the work, agrees with what other writers have delivered concerning the mysteries.

If the Golden Ass of Apuleius was written, as Warburton believes, in support of the pagan worship, it is perhaps strange that its author should have chosen, as a prototype, the Ass of Lucian; which, like many other works of that satirist, was intended to ridicule the heathen mythology. Both compositions derived their origin from the writings of Lucius Patrensis, which are not now extant; but are supposed to have been an account of metamorphoses according to the popular theology. One of these transformations, was, for the sake of ridicule, adopted by Lucian in his Ass; which, though the leading incidents are the same, is a mere sketch or outline of the Golden Ass of the Roman. Thus Apuleius has added the story of the assassination of the bottles, and the mock trial which ensued. He has also given a serious and sacred air to the restoration to the human form, which Lucian accidentally effects by plucking some roses from a by-stander, when condemned to an exhibition similar to that from which Apuleius escaped. The long account of the initiation into the mysteries, is substituted for the ludicrous incident which terminates the adventures of Lucian; who,

having, in his original shape, sought refuge with a lady in whose sight he often found favour as an ass, was turned out with disgrace on account of the diminution of his charms.

The Golden Ass is also enriched with numerous episodes, which are the invention of Apuleius, or at least are not to be found in the work of Lucian. Of these the best known, and by far the most beautiful, is the story of Cupid and Psyche, which is related by the female servant of the banditti to the young lady they had taken captive.

A certain king had three daughters, of whom the youngest and most lovely was named Psyche. Her charms indeed were so wonderful that her father's subjects began to adore her, and pay to her the homage which should have been reserved for Venus. The exasperated goddess commands her son to avenge her on this rival, by inspiring her with a passion for some unworthy object; but while employed in this design, Cupid himself becomes enamoured of the princess. Meanwhile, in obedience to the response of an oracle, Psyche is exposed on a barren rock, where she is destined to become the prey of a monster. From this hapless situation she is borne by the commissioned Zephyr, who wafts her to a green and delightful valley. Here she enjoys a refreshing sleep; and on awakening

perceives a grove, in the centre of which was a fountain, and near the fountain a splendid palace. The roof of this structure was supported by golden pillars, the walls were covered with silver, and every species of animal was represented in exquisite statuary at the portal: Psyche enters this edifice, where a splendid feast is prepared; she hears a voice inviting her to partake of the repast, but no one appears. After this sumptuous banquet is removed, she listens to a delightful concert, which proceeds from unseen musicians. In this enchanting residence she is espoused and visited every night by Cupid. Her husband, who was ever invisible, forbids her to attempt to see him, adding that her happiness depended on her obedience to the prohibition. In these circumstances Cupid, at her earnest solicitation, reluctantly agrees to bring her sisters to the palace. These relatives being envious of the happiness of their younger sister, try to persuade her that her husband is a serpent, who would ultimately devour her. Psyche, though by this time she should have been sufficiently qualified to judge how far this suspicion was well founded, resolves to satisfy herself of the truth by ocular demonstration. Bearing a lamp in one hand, and a dagger in the other to destroy him should he prove a monster, she ap-

proaches the couch of her husband while he is asleep. In the agitation produced by the view of his angelic form, she allows a drop of scalding oil to fall on his shoulder. The irritated god flies from her presence, and leaves her a prey to remorse and despair. The enchanted garden and the gorgeous palace vanish along with him. Psyche finds herself alone and solitary on the banks of a river. Under the protection of Pan she wanders through the country, and successively arrives at the kingdoms of her sisters, by each of whom she is repulsed. The victim equally of the rage of Venus and of her son, she roams through all the regions of the earth in search of the celestial lover whose favour she had forfeited. She is also subjected to various trials by Venus, one of which is to bring water from a fountain guarded by ever-watchful dragons. Jupiter, at length, takes pity on her misfortunes, endows her with immortality, and confirms her union with her forgiving husband. On this occasion the hours empurple the sky with roses; the graces shed aromatic odours through the celestial halls; Apollo accompanies the lyre with his voice; the god of Arcadia touches his sylvan reeds; and the Muses join in the chorus.

This allegory is supposed by some writers to be

founded on an obscure tradition of the fall of man, and to form an emblem of his temptation, transgression, repentance, and subsequent reception into the favour of the godhead. Its meaning, however, is probably more restricted, and only comprehends the progress of the soul to perfection, the possession of divine love, and reward of immortality. From the earliest times the influence of religious sentiments has been typified by the hopes and fears of an amatory attachment. This style of composition was adopted by the rhapsodists of Hindostan and Persia, and bewitched the luxuriant imagination of the wisest of mankind. Mr Bryant, in his *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, (vol. ii. 388,) informs us that one of the emblems among the Egyptians was Psyche (ψυχή) who, though represented as a beautiful female, was originally no other than the Aurelia, or butterfly, an insect which remains in a state of torpor during winter, but at the return of spring comes forth with new life, and in beautiful attire. This was deemed a picture of the soul of man, and of the immortality to which he aspired; and more particularly of Osiris, who, after being confined in a coffin, enjoyed a renewal of life. This second birth is described under the character of Psyche, and as it was the fruit of divine love, of which Eros was

the emblem, we find this person often introduced as a concomitant of Psyche.

Whatever may be the concealed meaning of the allegory, the story of Cupid and Psyche is certainly a beautiful fiction. Of this the number of translations and imitations may be considered as a proof. Mr Rose, in the notes to his version of *Partenopex de Blois*, has pointed out its striking resemblance to that romance, as also to the *Three Calendars*, and to one of the *Persian Tales*. The labours to which Psyche is subjected seems to be the origin of all fairy tales, particularly *Gracieuse et Percinet*, and the whole story has been beautifully versified by Marino in his poem *L'Adone*. Cupid is introduced in the fourth book relating it for the amusement of Adonis, and he tells it in such a manner as to form the most pleasing episode of that delightful poem. I need not mention the well-known imitation by Fontaine, nor the drama of Psyche, which was performed with the utmost magnificence at Paris in 1670, and is usually published in the works of Moliere, but was in fact the effort of the united genius of that author, Corneille, Quinault, and Lulli.

Nor have the fine arts less contributed to the embellishment of this fable ; the marriage of Cupid and Psyche has furnished Raphael with a series of

paintings, which are among the finest of his works, and which adorned the walls of the Farnese Palace in the vicinity of Rome. In one compartment he has represented the council of the gods deliberating on the nuptials—in another the festival of the reconciliation. The frieze and casements are painted with the sufferings of Psyche, and the triumphs of Cupid over each individual god.

The monuments too of ancient sculpture represented Cupid and Psyche in the various circumstances of their adventures. It is from an ancient intaglio, a fine onyx in possession of the Duke of Marlborough, and from another, of which there is a print in Spence's *Polymetis*, that Darwin has drawn his beautiful picture in the fourth canto of the *Botanic Garden*:—

So pure, so soft, with sweet attraction shone
Fair Psyche kneeling at the ethereal throne,
Won with coy smile the admiring court of Jové,
And warmed the bosom of unconquered Love.
Beneath a moving shade of fruits and flowers,
Onward they march to Hymen's sacred bowers;
With lifted torch he lights the festive train
Sublime, and leads them in his golden chain;
Joins the fond pair, indulgent to their vows,
And hides with mystic veil their blushing brows.
Round their fair forms their mingling arms they fling,
Meet with warm lip and clasp with rustling wing.

CHAPTER III.

Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe—Romances of Chivalry relating to the early and fabulous History of Britain, particularly to Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table—Merlin—Sangreal—Perceval—Lancelot du Lac—Meliadus—Tristan—Isaie le Triste—Artus—Gyron—Perceforest—Artus de la Bretagne—Cleriadus.

FABULOUS narrative, we have seen in a former part of this work, like almost every one of the arts of man, originated in the desire of perfecting and improving nature, of rendering the great more vast, the rich more splendid, and the gay more beautiful. It removed, as it were, from the hands of fortune the destinies of mankind, rewarded virtue and valour with success, and covered treachery and baseness with opprobrium.

It was soon perceived that men sympathize not with armies or nations, but with individuals ; and the poet who sung the fall of empires, was forced to place a few in a prominent light, with whose success or misfortunes his hearers might be affected, while they were altogether indifferent to the rout or dissection of the crowds by which they were followed. It was thought, at last, that narratives might be composed where the interest should only be demanded for one or two individuals, whose adventures, happiness, or misery, might of themselves afford delight. The experiment was attended with success ; and as men sympathize most readily with events which may occur to themselves, or the situations in which they have been, or may be, the incidents of fiction derived their character from the manners of the age. In a gay and luxurious country stories of love became acceptable. Hence the Grecian novels were composed, and, as, in relating the adventures of the lovers, it was natural to depict what might really have taken place, the general features of the times, the inroads of pirates, religious ceremonies, &c. were chiefly delineated. The habits of the monks in like manner gave rise to spiritual romance, and the notion of tranquillity in the fields of Greece may have suggested the

beautiful rural images portrayed in the pastoral of Longus.

Now when, by some great convulsion, a vast change is effected in manners, the incidents of fiction will necessarily be changed also; first, because the former occurrences become less natural, and, secondly, give less delight. From the very nature then of domestic fiction, it must vary with the forms and habits and customs of society, which it must picture as they occur successively,

“ And catch the manners living as they rise.”

Never in the annals of the human race did a greater change of manners take place than in the middle ages, and accordingly, we must be prepared to expect a prodigious alteration in the character of fictitious literature, which we have seen may be expected to vary with the manners it would describe. But not only was there a change in the nature of the characters themselves, and the adventures which occurred to them, but there was a very peculiar style of embellishment adopted, which, as it does not seem to have any necessary connection with the characters or adventures which it was employed to adorn, has given to the historians of literature no little labour to explain. The

species of machinery, such as giants, dragons, and enchanted castles, which forms the seasoning of the adventures of chivalry, has been distinguished by the name of *Romantic Fiction*; and we shall now proceed to discuss the various systems which have been formed to account for its origin.

Different theories have been suggested for the purpose of explaining the origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe. The subject is curious, but is involved in much darkness and uncertainty.

To the northern Scalds, to the Arabians, to the people of Armorica or Britany, and to the classical tales of antiquity, has been successively ascribed the origin of those extraordinary fables, which have been "so wildly disfigured in the romances of chivalry, and so elegantly adorned by the Italian Muse."

In the investigation of this subject, a considerable confusion seems to have arisen from the supporters of the respective systems, having blended those elements of romance which ought to be referred to separate origins. They have mixed together, or at least they have made no proper distinction between three things, which seem, in their elementary principles at least, to be totally unconnected. 1. The arbitrary fictions of romance, by which I mean the embellishments of dragons, en-

chanters, &c. 2. That spirit of enterprise and adventure which pervaded all the tales of chivalry. 3. The historical materials, if they deserve that name, relating to Arthur and Charlemagne, which form the ground-work of so large a proportion of this class of compositions.

In treating this subject it will therefore be proper to consider, 1. The origin of those wild and improbable fictions, those supernatural ornaments, which form the machinery of Romance, and which alone should be termed Romantic Fiction. 2. The rise of that spirit of chivalry which gave birth to the eagerness for single combat, the fondness for roaming in search of adventures, and the obligation of protecting and avenging the fair; and, lastly, we shall consider how these fabulous embellishments, and this spirit of adventure, was appropriated to the story of individual knights, and treat of those materials concerning Arthur and the Round Table, and the Peers of Charlemagne, whose exploits, real or fictitious, have been made the subject of romance.

I. One theory (which, I believe, was first adopted by M. Mallet¹) is, that what are termed the arbitrary fictions of romance, have been exclusively

¹ Introduction a l'Histoire de Dannemarck.

— derived from the northern Scalds. This system has been strenuously maintained by subsequent writers, and particularly by Dr Percy,¹ who observes, that the Scalds originally performed the functions of historians, by recording the victories and genealogies of their princes in a kind of narrative song. When history, by being committed to prose, assumed a more stable and more simple form, and was taken out of their hands, it became their business chiefly to entertain and delight. Hence they embellished their recitals with marvellous fictions, calculated to allure the gross and ignorant minds of their audience. Long before the time of the crusades, they believed in the existence of giants and dwarfs, in spells and enchantments. These became the ornaments of their works of imagination, and they also invented combats with dragons and monsters, and related stories of the adventures of knights with giants and sorcerers.

Besides this assumption, Dr Percy also maintains that the spirit of chivalry, the eagerness after adventure, and the extravagant courtesy, which are its chief characteristics, existed among the northern nations long before the introduction of the feudal system, or the establishment of knighthood as a regular order.

¹ Reliques of Ant. Eng. Poetry, vol. iii.

These fictions and ideas, he asserts, were introduced into Normandy by the Scalds, who probably attended the army of Rollo in its migration to that province from the north. These bards transmitted their skill to their successors the minstrels, who adopted the religion and opinions of the new countries. In place of their pagan ancestors they substituted the heroes of Christendom, whose feats they embellished with the Scaldic fictions of giants and enchanter. Such stories were speedily propagated through France, and by an easy transition passed into England after the Norman Conquest.

A second hypothesis, which was first suggested by Salmasius, and which has been followed out by Mr T. Warton,¹ ascribes to the Saracens the foundation of romantic fiction. It had at one time been a received opinion in Europe, that the wonders of Arabian imagination were first communicated to the western world by means of the crusades; but Mr Warton, while he argues that these expeditions tended greatly to propagate this mode of fabling, contends that these fictions were introduced at a much earlier period by the Arabians, who, in the beginning of the eighth century, set-

¹ Hist. of English Poetry, vol. I.

tled in Spain. Through that country they disseminated those extravagant inventions peculiar to their fertile genius. Those creations of fancy, the natural offspring of a warm and luxuriant climate, were eagerly received, and colder imaginations were kindled by the presence of these enlivening visitors. The ideal tales of the eastern invaders, recommended by a brilliancy of description hitherto unknown to the barren fancy of those who inhabited a western region, were rapidly diffused through the continent of Europe. From Spain, by the communication of commercial intercourse through the ports of Toulon and Marseilles, they passed into France. In the latter kingdom they received the earliest and most welcome reception in the district of Armorica or Britany. That province had in a manner been peopled by a colony of Welsh, who had emigrated thither in the fourth century. Hence a close connection subsisted between Wales and Britany for many ages. The fables current in the latter country were collected by Guaitier, Archdeacon of Oxford, who presented them to Geoffrey of Monmouth. His Latin Chronicle, compiled from these materials, forms one of the principal sources of tales of chivalry, and consists entirely of Arabian inventions.

Mr Warton next proceeds to point out the co-

incidence between fictions undoubtedly Arabic, and the machinery of the early romances. He concludes with maintaining, that if Europe was in any way indebted to the Scalds for the extravagant stories of giants and monsters, these fables must still be referred to an eastern origin, and must have found their way into the north of Europe along with an Asiatic nation, who, soon after Mithridates had been overthrown by Pompey, fled from the dominion of the Romans, and under the conduct of Odin settled in Scandinavia.

These two systems, which may be termed the Gothic and the Arabian, are those which have found the most able supporters. As far as relates to the supernatural ornaments of romance (for it is this branch alone that is at present to be considered) the two theories, though very different, are by no means incompatible. From a view of the character of Arabian and Gothic fiction, it appears that neither is exclusively entitled to the credit of having given birth to the wonders of romance. The early framers of the tales of chivalry may be indebted to the northern bards for those wild and terrible images congenial to a frozen region, and owe to Arabian invention that magnificence and splendour, those glowing descriptions

and luxuriant ornaments, suggested by the enchanting scenery of an eastern climate,

And wonders wild of Arabesque combine,
With Gothic imagery of darker shade.

It cannot be denied, and indeed has been acknowledged by Mr Warton, that the fictions of the Arabians and Scalds are totally different. The fables and superstitions of the northern bards are of a darker shade, and more savage complexion, than those of the Arabians. There is something in their fictions that chills the imagination. The formidable objects of nature with which they were familiarized in their northern solitudes, their precipices, and frozen mountains, and gloomy forests, acted on their fancy, and gave a tincture of horror to their imagery. Spirits, who send storms over the deep, who rejoice in the shriek of the drowning mariner, or diffuse irresistible pestilence; spells which preserve from poison, blunt the weapons of an enemy, or call up the dead from their tombs—these are the ornaments of northern poetry. The Arabian fictions are of a more splendid nature; they are less terrible indeed, but possess more variety and magnificence; they lead us

through delightful forests, and raise up palaces glittering with gold and diamonds.¹

It may also be observed, that, allowing the early Scaldic odes to be genuine, we find in them no dragons, giants, magic rings, or enchanted castles. These are only to be met with in the compositions of the bards who flourished after the native vein of Runic fabling had been enriched by the tales of the Arabians. But if we look in vain to the early Gothic poetry for many of those fables which adorn the works of the romancers, we shall easily find them in the ample field of oriental fiction. Thus the Asiatic romances and chemical works of the Arabians are full of enchantments, similar to those described in the Spanish, and even in the French, tales of chivalry. Magical rings were an important part of the eastern philosophy, and seem to have given rise to those which are of so much service to the Italian poets. In the eastern *Peris* we may trace the origin of the European fairies in their qualities, and perhaps in their name. The griffin, or hippogriff, of the Italian writers, seems to be the famous *Simurgh* of the Persians, which makes such a figure in the epic poems of *Sadii* and *Ferdusii*.

¹ Warton's *Hist of Eng. Poetry*.

A great number of these romantic wonders were collected in the east by that idle and lying horde of pilgrims and palmers who visited the Holy Land through curiosity, restlessness, or devotion, and who, returning from so great a distance, imposed every fiction on a believing audience. They were subsequently introduced into Europe by the fablers of France, who took up arms, and followed their barons to the conquest of Jerusalem. At their return they imported into Europe the wonders they had heard, and enriched romance with an infinite variety of oriental fictions.

This mode of introduction of the eastern fables into Europe is much more natural than that pointed out by Mr Warton. The Arabians were not only secluded from the other inhabitants of Spain, but were the objects of their deepest animosity; and hence the Castilians would not readily imbibe the fictions of their enemies. It is unfortunate too that the intermediate station from the Moorish dominions in Spain should be fixed in Armorica, the province of France the most remote from Grenada.

But if Armorica cannot without difficulty be adopted as a resting place of romantic fiction; far less can it be considered as its native country, which has been assumed in a third hypothesis; maintained

by Mr Leyden in his Introduction to the Complaynt of Scotland. It is there argued that a colony of Britons took refuge in Armorica during the fifth century, from the tyranny of the Saxons, and carried with them the archives which had escaped the fury of the conquerors. The memory of Arthur and his knights was preserved in Armorica as fresh as in Wales or Cornwall. The Bretons, too, were the first people in France with whom the Normans had a friendly intercourse. The class of French romances relating to Charlemagne, ascribed to that monarch the feats of Charles Martel, an Armorican chief, whose exploits would more probably be celebrated by the minstrels of his own country than by Turpin, or any other writer of fabulous chronicles. In short, all the French romances originated in Britany, and all the nations of Europe derived their tales of chivalry from the French.

I am far from meaning to deny that copious materials of fiction were amassed in Britany, and were thence disseminated through France and England, but it cannot be believed that the machinery of romance had its birth in a country, which, on the most favourable supposition, can only be regarded as a link in the chain of fiction,

and far less that this pitiful kingdom was the only cradle of that spirit of chivalry, which at one time pervaded all the nations of Europe.

In short, this Armorican system seems to have arisen from mistaking the collection of materials for the sources whence they derived their embellishment.

A fourth hypothesis has been suggested, which represents the machinery and colouring of fiction, the stories of enchanted gardens, monsters, and winged steeds, which have been introduced into romance, as derived from the classical and mythological authors; and as being merely the ancient stories of Greece, grafted on modern manners, and modified by the customs of the age. The classical authors, it is true, were in the middle ages scarcely known; but the superstitions they inculcated had been prevalent for too long a period, and had taken too firm a hold on the mind, to be easily obliterated. The mythological ideas which still lingered behind, were diffused in a multitude of popular works. In the Travels of Sir John Mandeville, there are many allusions to ancient fable; and, as Middleton has shown that a great number of the popish rites were derived from pagan ceremonies, it is scarcely to be doubted that

many classical were converted into romantic fictions. This, at least is certain, that the classical system presents the most numerous and least exceptionable prototypes of the fables of romance.

In many of the tales of chivalry there is a knight detained from his quest, by the enticements of a sorceress; and who is nothing more than the Calypso or Circe of Homer. The story of Andromeda might give rise to the fable of damsels being rescued by their favourite knight when on the point of being devoured by a sea monster. The heroes of the *Iliad* and *Æneid* were both furnished with enchanted armour; and, in the story of Polyphemus, a giant and his cave are exhibited. Herodotus, in his history, speaks of a race of Cyclops who inhabited the north, and waged perpetual war with the tribe of griffons, which was in possession of mines of gold. The expedition of Jason in search of the golden fleece; the apples of the Hesperides, watched by a dragon; the king's daughter who is an enchantress, who falls in love with and saves the knight, are akin to the marvels of romantic fiction; especially of that sort supposed to have been introduced by the Arabians. Some of the less familiar fables of classical mythology, as the image in the *Theogony* of Hesiod of the murky prisons in which the Titans

were pent up by Jupiter, under the custody of strong armed giants, bear a striking resemblance to the more wild sublimity of the Gothic fictions.

And, perhaps, it may be considered as a confirmation of this theory, that, in the 13th century, many classical stories appeared both in prose and in a metrical form, veiled in the garb of romantic fiction. Of this sort are the Latin works of Dares Phrygius, and Dictys Cretensis, concerning the wars of Troy; and the still more ample chronicle of Guido de Colonna, formed from these authors through the medium of the French metrical work of Benoit de Saint More. But these and similar compositions shall be more particularly mentioned when we come to treat of the classical romances in which Achilles, Jason, and Hercules, were adopted into chivalry, and celebrated in common with Lancelot, Roland, and Amadis, whom they so nearly resembled in the extravagance of their adventures.

Mr Ritson has successively ridiculed the Gothic, Arabian, and Classical systems; and contended; that the origin of romance, in every age or country, must be sought in the different sorts of superstition which have from time to time prevailed. It is, he contends, a vain and futile endeavour, to seek elsewhere for the origin of fable. The French

tales of chivalry, in particular, are too ancient to be indebted for their existence to any barbarous nation whatever. In all climes where genius has inspired, fiction has been its earliest product, and every nation in the globe abounds in romances of its own invention, and which it owes to itself alone.

And, in fact, after all, a great proportion of the wonders of romance must be attributed to the imagination of the authors. A belief in supernatural agency seems to have prevailed in every age and country; and monsters of all sorts have been created by exaggeration or fear. It was natural for the vulgar, in an ignorant age, as we see from the Turks even of the present day, to believe a palace, surpassingly beautiful, to be the work of enchanter. To this we must add the supernatural wonders conjured up by a superstitious fancy, and the natural ones supplied by a mind that was unacquainted with the constitution of things, or indulged in frolicsome combination. The griffin is compounded of the lion and eagle; the snake and the lizard comprise the analysis, and may have suggested the notion of a dragon.¹ The idea once formed of a

¹ In Dr Zachary Grey's notes on *Hudibras*, (vol. I. p. 125,) there is a story of a man making a dragon from a rat.

being of larger dimensions than his fellow-mortals, it was easy to increase his proportions, and to diversify his shape with every variety of monstrous attribute; and it was natural, as in the case of Goliath, to bestow a ferocity of disposition, corresponding to the terrors of aspect. The notion of an enchanter being once conceived, it was not difficult to assign him more extensive powers, to render his spells more potent, and their effects more awful or splendid. "Impenetrable armour," says Mr Hobbes, "enchanted castles—invulnerable bodies—iron men—flying horses, and other such things, are easily feigned by them that dare."

II. Although the theories which have now been detailed may be sufficient, separately or united, to explain the origin of the supernatural ornaments

"Mr Jacob Bobart, botany professor of Oxford, did, about forty years ago, find a dead rat in the physical garden, which he made to resemble the common picture of dragons, by altering head and tail, and thrusting in taper sharp sticks, which distended the skin on each side, till it mimicked wings. He let it dry as hard as possible. The learned pronounced it a dragon; and one of them sent an accurate description to Magliabecchi, librarian to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Several fine copies of verses were wrote on so rare a subject; but at last Mr Bobart owned the cheat. However, it was looked upon as a master-piece of art, and, as such, deposited in the museum or anatomy school, where I saw it some years after."

of romance. Still they are to be considered merely as embellishments of those chivalrous adventures which occupy by far the greatest proportion of romantic compilation.

The classical system, allowing it to be well founded with regard to the introduction of giants, hippogriffs, or enchanters, cannot explain the enterprise, the gallantry, and romantic valour, attributed to the knights of chivalry. It is, no doubt, true, that a striking analogy subsists between the manners of the heroic and the Gothic ages. In both periods robbery was regarded as honourable; or, at least, was not the forerunner of infamy. Bastardy, in both ages, was in peculiar reputation. The most renowned knights of chivalry, as Roland and Amadis, were illegitimate; and the heroes of antiquity were the spurious offspring of demigods and nymphs. The martial games, too, may in their design and their effects, be considered as analogous to tournaments. A similar encouragement was given to the bards of Greece, and the minstrels of the middle ages; while Hercules and Bacchus, who are represented as roaming through their country, inflicting punishment on robbers, and extirpating monsters, may be regarded as the knight errants of antiquity. But these resemblances arose

merely from a correspondent state of manners ; since, at a similar stage of the social progress, similar ideas and customs are prevalent amongst different nations.

Still less can it be believed that the spirit of chivalry received its impulse from the knight errantry of Arabia. This part of his system, Mr Warton has but feebly urged. The nature of Arabian and chivalrous enterprise was by no means the same ; nor is it probable that the Europeans derived the dominant part of their manners and institutions from a secluded and a hostile people.

But Dr Percy, and the other supporters of the Gothic system, have strenuously maintained that the ideas of chivalry, the soul and subject of romance, subsisted among the northern nations, and were thence transfused into the fictions of the subsequent age. I conceive, however, that although the rudiments of chivalry may have existed, these notions were not sufficiently general, nor developed, to have become, without farther preparation, the reigning topics of composition. Instances, too, of chivalrous gallantry would have been found in the earlier ages of the history of France, but the manners during the two first races of its monarchs, were far from exhibiting any symptoms of courtesy.

It was under the feudal establishments, subsequently erected in Europe, that chivalry received its vigour, and was invested with the privileges of a regular institution. The chivalry, therefore, unfolded in romance, was the offspring of existing manners, and was merely an exaggerated picture of the actual state of society, of which oppression, anarchy, and restless courage, were the characteristics, but which sometimes produced examples of virtue and enthusiasm.

On the fall of the Roman empire, the lands overrun by the barbarous nations being parcelled out amongst a number of independent chieftains, whose aims and interest frequently interfered, it became an object with every baron to assemble round his person, and to attach, by the strongest bonds, the greatest possible number of young men of rank and courage. The knight, or soldier, at the same time found it necessary to look to some superior for support, against the oppression of other chieftains.

That these ties might be rendered closer, and that the candidate for knighthood might be instructed in the arts of courtesy and war, it was customary to remove him at an early age from his father's house, to the court or castle of his future patron.

The young persons destined for this sort of life, first acted as pages or varlets ; they performed menial services, which at that time were not considered as degrading ; they were initiated into the ceremonial of a court, and were at the same time instructed in those bodily exercises which were considered the best preparation for their future career.

The castle in which the candidate for knight-hood received his education, was usually thronged with young persons of a different sex. The intercourse which he thus enjoyed was the best school for the refinements of courtesy : he was taught to select some lady as the mistress of his soul, to whom he referred all his sentiments and actions. Her image was implanted in his heart, amid the fairy scenes of childhood, and was afterwards blended with its recollections. In the middle ages, society was in an intermediate state, removed from the extremes of indigence and luxury, which is most favourable to love ; and that passion was sometimes so nourished by obstacles, that it was exalted into a species of devotion.

Thus the service of a mistress became the future glory and occupation of the candidate for knight-hood. At the same time that this duty was inculcated, the emulation of military excellence was

fanned by the example of his compeers and his patron. When the youth passed to the condition of esquire, they attended their master abroad ; if he engaged in battle they took no part in the encounter, but remained spectators of the combat, and, by attention to the various movements, were instructed in the art of war.

Their time was, also, in a great measure devoted to those sports which were kindred to the occupations of war, and the knowledge of which was an essential preliminary to the reception into the order of knighthood.

If that investiture be merely considered as a ceremony, by which young persons destined to the military profession received their arms, its institution, we are told, is as old as the age of Charlemagne ; but, if considered as a dignity, which, by certain forms, conferred the first rank in the military order, it cannot easily be traced higher than the 11th century. In the forests of Germany, the initiation of a youth into the profession of a warrior, had been attended with appropriate ceremonies. The chieftain of the tribe decorated him with a sword and armour,—a simple form, which, in the progress of the feudal system, was converted into a mysterious and pompous rite.

On his reception into this order,* the knight be-

came bound to the observance of loyalty to his superior, to a severe distribution of justice to his vassals, to an inviolable adherence to his word, and attention to a courtesy which embellished his other qualities, and softened his other duties. All those who were unjustly oppressed, or conceived themselves to be so, were entitled to claim his protection and succour. The ladies in this respect enjoyed the most ample privileges. Destitute of the means of support, and exposed to the outrages of avarice or passion, they were consigned to his special care, and placed under the guardianship of his valiant arm.

The promotion of knights, which sometimes took place after the performance of military exploits, but more frequently on church festivals, coronations, baptisms, or the conclusion of peace, were generally followed by jousts and tournaments. Of these exhibitions (which were of French invention, and were introduced about the time of the first crusade), the former was a more private and inferior, the latter a more pompous and public exhibition. Both were contrived for the purpose of interesting the mind, when scenes of real warfare did not present themselves, and of displaying, at the same time, the magnificence of the prince or baron.

Some time before the exhibition of a tournament,

heralds were dispatched through the country, to invite all knights to contend for prizes, and merit the affection of their mistresses.

After the tournaments were proclaimed, they frequently commenced with skirmishing between the squires, and those who particularly distinguished themselves, were allowed to enter the lists with the knights. When it came to the turn of the latter, each knight usually declared himself the servant of some lady, who generally presented him with a token of favour, a veil, a scarf, or a bracelet, with which he adorned his shield, or surmounted his helmet. If these marks of distinction were carried off in the contest, the lady sent him others to re-animate his courage, and invigorate his exertions.

In all these rencounters certain rules of combat were established, which it was considered infamous to violate. Thus, it was not lawful to wound the adversary's horse, nor to strike a knight who took off his visor or his helmet.

When the tournaments were concluded, the conquerors were conducted to the palace of the prince or baron with much solemnity; their deeds were inscribed on the records of the heralds at arms, and formed the subject of the lays of the minstrel, which were spread through the neighbouring courts, to excite emulation or envy.

But it would be endless to describe those ceremonies by which tournaments were prepared, accompanied, or followed, and which occupy, I am sure, more than a fourth of the romances of chivalry, which, in this respect, have merely presented an embellished picture of what actually occurred.

As the genius of chivalry had ever studied to represent in tournaments a faithful picture of the labours and dangers of war, it had ever preserved in war an image of the courtesy which prevailed in tournaments. The desire of pleasing some lady, and of appearing worthy of her, was in the true, as in the fictitious combat, one of the strongest motives that prompted to heroic action. In real battle the knight was frequently decked with the device of his mistress, and seriously offered combat to an enemy (not, indeed, as a primary cause of quarrel, but where other causes of hostility existed), to dispute the pre-eminence of the beauty of their mistresses, and the strength of their attachment. As the prowess, too, of a single combatant was conspicuous, and had a considerable influence on the fortune of the day, the same individuals were led frequently to encounter each other, which gave rise to that peculiar species of combat painted in the romances of chivalry.

The policy which employed love, united with reverence for the ladies, and the thirst of glory, to in-

aspire sentiments of bravery and honour, also joined the heroes of its creation by the ties of friendship. They became united for all their future exploits, or for the accomplishment of some exalted enterprise, which had a limited object ;—and hence the fraternity of arms, by which the knights are frequently associated in the tales of chivalry.

At their return from their adventures, the knights were obliged by oath to give the heralds at arms a faithful account of their exploits ; an obligation which explains their declining no service of danger, though it was to be performed without witnesses, and might have been avoided without detection.

Enough, I trust, has been said to account for that passion for arms, that love of enterprise, and that extravagant species of gallantry, which were the inevitable consequence of the feudal principles, and are the characteristic features of all romances of chivalry.

Next to those encounters, undertaken from the love of enterprise, or of the fair, the great proportion of those related in romance may be termed judicial. These took place on a defiance of the challenger to the acceptor, or an accusation against a third party in whom the acceptor was interested, or whose cause he espoused from a spirit of chi-

valry. Such encounters were suggested by the judicial combats by which during the middle ages the disputes in civil courts were actually decided. The judge, or magistrate, unable to restrain the violence of litigants, and wishing not to lose all shadow of authority, contented himself with superintending the ceremonies and regulating the forms of a mode of decision so consonant to their temper. This appeal to the sword was also encouraged by a retributive principle in the human mind; which renders it natural to believe that guilt will be punished and innocence vindicated. The impatience of mankind led them to imagine that the intervention ought to take place in this world, and that a solemn appeal to Heaven would be followed by a discovery of its will. This opinion was in those times strengthened by means of the clergy, whose interest it was to represent Divine power as dispensing with the laws of nature on the most frivolous occasions.

In consequence too of the well-known circumstances which tended to promote the influence of the church, the real knight was frequently characterized by the appearance at least of a warm and zealous devotion. His religious duties consisted in visiting holy places, in depositing his own arms, or those of conquered enemies in monasteries or

temples, in the observance of different festivals, or the practice of exercises of penitence. A superstitious veneration for the monastic profession, even induced many individuals, both knights and princes, to finish their days in spiritual seclusion. Hence a romance of chivalry, as will be afterwards seen, exhibits examples of the most superstitious devotion, and frequently terminates with the retirement of the principal character to a monastery or hermitage.

To the love of war, and of enterprise, to the extravagant gallantry, united with superstition, by which the order of knighthood was distinguished, may be traced the greater proportion of the adventures delineated in romance. There we shall hardly find a motive of action which may not be referred to some of the principles by which society in those ages was in reality actuated. On this favourable basis of manners and ideas, the credulity or fancy of the age grafted the supernatural wonders drawn from the sources that have already been traced; and the adventures of knights, embellished by these additional marvels, were exaggerated, extended, and multiplied to infinity by the imagination of romancers.

Such are probably the sources whence fablers have been supplied with the general adventures

of chivalry, and the romantic embellishments by which they have been adorned.

III. We must now consider how these adventures and embellishments have been appropriated to individual knights, and turn our attention to the materials which have supplied the leading subjects and the principal characters of romantic composition.

At a time when chivalry excited such universal admiration, and when its effects were at least ostensibly directed to the good of the public, it was natural that history and fable should be ransacked to furnish examples that might increase emulation.

Arthur and Charlemagne, with their peers, were the heroes most early and most generally selected for this purpose. The tales concerning these warriors are the first specimens extant of this species of composition, and from their early popularity, from the beauty of the fictions with which they were in the beginning supported, and from flattering the vanity of the two first nations in Europe, they long continued (diversified indeed, and enlarged by subsequent embellishments) to be the prevalent and favourite topics.

And here it is proper to divide the prose romances, with which we shall be afterwards engaged, into four classes :—1. Those relating to Ar-

thur and the knights of the Round Table. 2. Those connected with Charlemagne and his Paladines. 3. The Spanish and Portuguese romances, which chiefly consist of the adventures of the imaginary families of Amadis and Palmerin. 4. What may be termed classical romances, which represent the heroes of antiquity in the guise of romantic fiction.

When we come to treat of the romances relating to Charlemagne, we shall consider the influence of the chronicle attributed to Turpin; but our attention is in the first place demanded by the romances of Arthur and the Round Table, as they are the most ancient and numerous class of which there is any trace. These originated in the early and chimerical legends of Armorica and Wales; the ancient Latin chronicles of this island, which have been founded on them; and the subsequent metrical romances of the English and Norman minstrels.

The Norman conquerors are said first to have become interested in the history and antiquities of Britain during the reign of Stephen, as by that period they had begun to consider themselves natives.

From the writings of Gildas or Nennius, however, they could not easily have extracted a consistent or probable story.

Gildas, or, as Mr Gibbon has styled him, the British Jeremiah, is the author of *Lamentations over the Destruction of Britain*, which is a whining elegy, and an epistle, which is a frantic satire on the vices of his countrymen: he has given exaggerated expressions, and distorted facts, instead of presenting an authentic narrative of our early annals, an important object which he might easily have accomplished; as, according to tradition, he was the son of Caw, a British prince, who lived in the sixth century, and was engaged along with his father in the wars carried on by his countrymen against the Northumbrian Saxons. After the defeat of the Britons at Cattraith, he fled into Wales, and acted as schoolmaster at Bangor.

Nennius is said to have lived about the middle of the ninth century; his work is merely a dry epitome; nor even of this abstract does there exist a pure and perfect copy. He is solicitous to quote his authorities, but unfortunately they are not of the most unexceptionable nature, as they consist in the lives of saints and ancient British traditions, on which he bestows credit in proportion to their absurdity. In one of his chapters he has given an outline of the story of Brut, which coincides with the account of Geoffrey of Monmouth; and in chapter fourth he commences a circumstantial de-

tail of the life of Merlin, corresponding, in many respects, with the incidents of romance.¹

Besides the lachrymal history of Gildas, and the jejune narrative of Nennius, there existed many Welsh traditions which seem to have occupied the attention of Norman antiquaries.

The annals of Wales had long laboured in Arthur's commendation, and the whole island was about to acquire traditional possession of his character, when Walter Calenius, or Gualtier, as he is sometimes called, Archdeacon of Oxford, amassed, during an expedition to Armorica, a great collection of these materials. On his return he presented this medley of historical songs and traditions to Geoffrey of Monmouth, who founded on them a chronicle of Britain, which was written in Latin prose, and is supposed to have been finished about 1140. A notion has been adopted by some authors that Geoffrey composed, or invented, the most part of the chronicle which he professed to translate from British originals. This idea was first started by Polydore Virgil, who has been followed by later writers ; but it has been satisfactorily shown by Mr Ellis that there is no solid reason to doubt the repeated assertions of Geoffrey, that he

¹ Ellis's *Early Metrical Romances*.

has merely rendered into Latin the text of British authorities. His fabulous relations concerning Brut, Arthur, and Merlin, coincide with those contained in Nennius, or the lives of the Saints, and therefore could not have been invented by Geoffrey. The history, too, bears internal evidence of its Armorican descent, as it ascribes to Hoël, a hero of that country, many of the victories which tradition attributes to Arthur.

But whether this celebrated chronicle be the invention of Geoffrey, or whether it present a faithful picture of the traditions and fables at that period received as history, there can be no doubt, according to the expression of Mr Ellis, who has given an analysis of the whole work, that it is one of the corner-stones of romance.

This chronicle consists of nine books, each of which is divided into chapters, and commences with the history of Brutus, the son of Sylvius, and grandson of Ascanius, who, being exiled from Italy in consequence of having accidentally slain his father, takes refuge in Greece. There he obtains the hand of Imogen, daughter of a king of that country, and a fleet, with which he arrives in Albion (then only inhabited by a few giants), and founds the kingdom called Britain from his name. There is next presented an account of the fabu-

ious race of Brutus; particularly Arthur, and the whole concludes with the reign of Cadwallader, one of the descendants of that hero.

From the chronicle of Geoffrey it would indeed be difficult to extract any authentic history, but it stamped with the character of veracity the exploits of the early knights of chivalry; and authorized a compilation of the fables related of these fanciful heroes. In the age in which the chronicle appeared it was difficult to arrive at truth, and error was not easily detected. Criticism was hardly called into existence, and falsehood was adopted with an eagerness proportioned to its envelopement in the fascinating garb of wonder. The readers were more ignorant than the authors, and a credulous age readily grafted on stories that were evidently false, incidents that were physically impossible. These were drawn from the sources already pointed out, and were added, according to fancy, to unauthentic histories, which thus degenerated, or were exalted, into romance.

In the chronicle of Geoffrey, indeed, there is nothing said of the exploits of Tristan and Lancelot, or of the conquest of the Sangreal, which constitute so large a proportion of the romances of the Round Table. These were subsequent additions,

but probably derived, like the chronicle, from ancient British originals, as the names of the heroes, and the scenes of their adventures, are still British.

The chronicle of Geoffrey, and these traditional fables, were the origin of those tales which appeared in a metrical form, the shape in which, it is acknowledged, romance was first exhibited.

It seems, also, unquestionable that these metrical romances, though written in England, first appeared in the French language.

The term Romance was, in its earliest signification, appropriated to the dialects spoken in the different European provinces that had been subjected to the Roman empire, and of which Latin was the basis, though other materials might enter into the construction. The romance was at one time the colloquial language of Gaul. Subsequently, indeed, a variety of dialects was introduced into that country, but it was still preserved in Normandy; and thence it was again diffused through the other provinces to the north of the Loire.

The earliest specimens of northern French literature are metrical lives of the saints. These are supposed to have been translated from Latin compositions about the middle of the eleventh century. In the beginning of the following century they were followed by several didactic works, as the Bes-

tarius, a poem on natural history, by Phillip de Thaur, addressed to the queen of Henry I. of England, and a metrical treatise on chronology by the same author. It is believed, however, that no trace of a professed work of fiction—no specimen of what we should now term a romance, is to be found before the middle of the twelfth century. Then, indeed, the minstrels introduced a great variety of their own compositions, and formed new combinations from the numerous materials in their possession.

Before this time the language in which they wrote had passed into England by means of the Norman Conquest. The English, indeed, previous to this event had been prepared for the reception of the French language. Edward the Confessor had been educated in France, and, on his accession to the throne of England, promoted his continental favourites to the highest dignities. Under their influence the nation began to lay aside its English customs, and to imitate the language and manners of the French. (Ingulph. Hist. Croyl. p. 62. ap. Tyrwhitt, vol. iv.) These fashions having been adopted in compliance with the caprice of the reigning monarch, might probably have expired under his successors; but before this extirpation could be effected, the French language, by means of the Norman Conquest, became interwoven with

the new political system. The king, the chief officers of state, and a great proportion of the nobility, were Normans, and understood no tongue but that of their own country. Hence the few Saxons who were still admitted at court had the strongest inducements to acquire the language of their conquerors. William the First also distributed a share of his acquisitions among his great barons who had attended him; and who, when they had it in their power, retired from court to their feudal domains, followed by vassals from among their countrymen. Hence the language which was used in their common conversation and judicial proceedings, was diffused through the most distant provinces. All ecclesiastical preferments, too, were bestowed on Norman chaplains, and those who were promoted to abbacies were anxious to stock their monasteries with foreigners. Thus the higher orders of the clergy and laity spoke the French language, while the lower retained the use of their native tongue, but frequently added a knowledge of the dialect of the conquerors. Matters continued in this state with little variation during the reigns of the Norman kings and of the first monarchs of the house of Plantagenet.

The Norman minstrels, accordingly, who had followed their barons to the English court, naturally wrote and recited their metrical compositions

in the language which was most familiar to themselves, and which, being most prevalent, procured them the greatest number of readers of rank and distinction.

From the early connection of the Normans with the people of Britany, the minstrels had received from the latter the first traces of traditions, the rudiments of which they brought over with them to England.²

These they found in a more perfect state among the Welsh of this island. The invasion of the Normans, and the overthrow of the Saxons, were events beheld with exultation by the descendants of the *aboriginal* Britons, who readily associated with those who had avenged them on their bitterest enemies; while to the Normans the legends of the Welsh must have been more acceptable than those of the Saxons. In the long course of political intrigue, which took place between the period of the Norman invasion and the final subjugation of Wales, an intercourse must have taken place between that country and England sufficient to account for the interchange of any literary materials. The British lays communicated to the French minstrels in England were seldom com-

² Ellis's *Early Metrical Romances*, vol. I.

mitted to writing. Hence the same story was repeated with endless variations, and this system of traditional incident was added to the more stable relations contained in the chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

It seems to be generally believed that French metrical romances appeared in England and Normandy previous to any attempts of this nature at the court of Paris. This is evinced by the more liberal patronage of the English princes, the style and character of the romances themselves, and the persons to whom the original poems were addressed.

The oldest of these French metrical romances is one founded on the chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and entitled *Le Brut*: it was written about the year 1155, by Robert Wace, a native of Jersey, who brought down his work from the time of the imaginary Brutus to the death of Cadwallader, the era where Geoffrey ends; but it was subsequently carried down by others to the age of William Rufus. Wace is also the author of *Le Roman le Rou*, a fabulous and metrical history of the Dukes of Normandy from the time of Rollo. In the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries, an infinite variety of French metrical romances on the subject of Arthur and the knights of the Round Table appeared in Eng-

land and Normandy, as the Sangreal, Perceval, &c., written by Chrestien de Troyes, Menessier and others.

About the same period there appeared a great number of French metrical romances founded on the history of the Trojan war, in which classical heroes are celebrated. Few of these, however, at least at an early period, were converted into prose, while the metrical romances relating to the Round Table, either from accident or from flattering the vanity and prejudices of a nation by the celebration of its fictitious heroes, have, for the most part, been reduced into prose, and constituted, thus transformed, a formidable compilation, which came in time to supersede the metrical originals.

These prose romances, which form the proper subject of our enquiry, were mostly written in the course of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. It is extremely difficult, however, to ascertain the precise date of the composition of each, or to point out the authors by whom they were written.

The *data* by which we might attempt to fix the chronology of the prose romances, and which, at first view, would appear to be at once easy and certain, are, 1. The antiquity of the language; 2. The manners represented, since in ancient roman-

ces a delineation is given not of the customs, ceremonies, or dress of the period in which the imaginary heroes are feigned to have existed, but of those which prevailed at the time of the composition of the work. The tournaments in particular, with a description of which every romance is filled, should assist in this research. Thus at the institution of these spectacles the persons who had been long admitted into the order of chivalry contended during the first day, and the new knights on the succeeding ones. In process of time the new knights opened the tournament, and the squires were allowed to joust with them, but at length the distinctions that had formerly existed between the knight and the squire became, in a great measure, confounded. The light, however, that might naturally be expected to be drawn hence, has been darkened by the authors of the prose romances having servilely copied, in some instances, their metrical prototypes, and thus, without warning, represented the manners of a preceding age. In most instances, I believe, the prose romances were accommodated to the opinions and manners subsisting at the period of this new fabrication; but it is impossible to say with certainty what has been adopted and what is original. 3. The name of the person to whom the romance is addressed, or at

whose solicitation it is said to be written, may be of use in ascertaining the date. But the authors title their patrons in so general a way, that the inference to be drawn is vague and uncertain. Their works are written at the desire of King Henry or King Edward of England, and hence the period of their composition is only limited to the reign of one of the numerous monarchs who bore these names. 4. The date of the publication may be of assistance in fixing the chronology of some of the later romances of chivalry. But even this trifling aid is in most instances denied, the earliest impression being generally without date. Hence I am afraid that these *data* will be found, in most cases, to afford but a feeble and uncertain assistance.

With respect to the authors of the prose romances, it may be in the first place remarked, that these compositions were not announced to the reader as works of mere imagination, but, on the contrary, were always affirmed by their authors (who threw much opprobrium on the lying metrical romances) to contain matter of historical fact. Nor was this disputed by the simplicity of the readers; and the fables which had been disbelieved while in verse, were received without suspicion on their conversion into prose. Hence it became the in-

terest of the real authors, in order to give their works the stamp of authority, to abjure the metrical romances, from which they were in fact compiled, to feign either that these fables had been translated by them from Latin, or revised from ancient French prose, in which they had been originally written,—avertments which should never be credited unless otherwise established to be true.

But the system of mendacity was carried still farther, and fictitious names were generally assumed by the real authors. "Those," says Mr Ritson, "whose names appear as the authors of the old prose romances, are mostly men of straw : Of this sort are Robert de Borron, the pretended author, or rather translator, of Lancelot ; Lucas Sieur de Gast, the translator from Latin into French of the romance of Tristrem ; Gualter Map, who, though he really existed and was a poet of some eminence, was not in reality the author of *Histoire de Roy Artus* ; and Rusticien de Pise, who was feigned to have translated *Gyron the Courteous*." It is in the prefaces alone that any notices can be found with regard to the old romances or their authors ; but it requires some discernment to discover what is true, and to distinguish correct information from what was merely thrown out in jest, or intended to give the stamp of authority with the vulgar. In

general the information given in their prefaces by the romancers concerning their fellow-labourers is accurate, but every thing relating to themselves, or their own works, must be received with great suspicion.

Any information that can be elsewhere derived is in the highest degree inconsistent. Thus the metrical *Perceval*, according to the authors of the *Bibliothèque des Romans*, was written by Raoul de Beauvais. According to Tyrwhitt it was composed previous to 1191, in sixty thousand verses, by Chretien de Troyes, and from this, he says, was formed the French prose translation printed in 1530. Ritson informs us, that, according to some, Menessier was the author of the metrical *Perceval*: now, if we believe the authors of the *Bibliothèque*, this Menessier was the prose translator. The Abbe de la Rue says that *Perceval* was written in prose by Chretien de Troyes. I may add to these elucidations, that Warton alledges it was written in rhyme by Chretien de Troyes, but that it also appeared in a metrical shape by Menessier, and that the prose version is formed from the latter poem.

It will not excite surprise that the earliest of the French romances should be devoted to the celebration of a British monarch, when we consider that they were not written for the amusement of

the French, but of the Norman sovereigns of England. From the popularity of the British tales among the Norman minstrels, they obtained, as has been already shown, an early and extensive acquaintance with the traditional history of Arthur. He was the theme of their metrical compositions, and hence became the favourite hero in the prose romances of chivalry.

Of these, the earliest relating to that fabulous monarch, is the romance or book of

MERLIN.

The demons, alarmed at the number of victims which daily escaped their fangs since the birth of our Saviour, held a council of war. It was there resolved that one of their number should be sent to the world with instructions to engender on some virgin a child, who might act as their vicegerent on earth, and thus counteract the great plan that had been laid for the salvation of mankind. With this view the infernal deputy, having assumed a human form, insinuated himself into the confidence, and obtained admittance into the house, of a wealthy Briton. The fiend (though this was foreign from the purpose of his mission) could not resist embra-

cing an early opportunity of strangling his host, and then proceeded to attempt the seduction of his three daughters, which was more peculiarly an object of his terrestrial sojourn. The youngest of the family alone resisted his artifices, but she at length experienced the fate of her sisters, while rendered unconscious by sleep. On awakening, she was much perplexed by what had occurred, and confessed herself to a holy man called Blaise, who had all along been her protector, but who acknowledged himself altogether incompetent to account for the events of the preceding night.

The judges of the land, who soon after discovered the pregnancy of the young lady, were about to condemn her to death, according to the law and custom of the country;¹ but Blaise represented

¹ In another old romance, a regulation of this sort is said to have existed in France. *C'estoit la coustume en ce tems telle que quand une femme estoit grosse, que ce n'estoit de son Mari ou qu'elle ne fust mariee, on l'ardoit*, (*L. Hist. plaisante du noble Siperis de Vinevaux et de ses dix sept fils.*) In the *Orlando Furioso* this punishment is attributed to the law of Scotland;

L'aspra legge di Scozia empia e severa :

Rinaldo on hearing of it, exclaims with indignation,

Sia maladetto chi tal legge pose,

E maladetto chi la può patire ;

Debitamente muore una Crudele,

Non chi da vita al suo amator fidele.—(C. 4.)

that the execution should be at least deferred, as the child, who was about to come into the world, ought not to be involved in the punishment of the mother. The criminal was accordingly shut up in a tower, where she gave birth to the celebrated Merlin, whom Blaise instantly hurried to the baptismal font, and thus frustrated the hopes of the demons when on the verge of completion. Merlin, however, in spite of this timely redemption, retained many marks of his unearthly origin, of which his premature elocution was an early and unequivocal symptom. Immediately after his baptism, the mother took the child in her arms, and reproached him as the cause of the melancholy death she was about to suffer. But the infant smiling to her, replied, Fear not, my mother, you will not die for me. Accordingly the prosecution being resumed, and Merlin, the *corpus delicti*, being produced in court, he addressed the judges, and revealed the illegitimacy of one of their number, who was not the son of the person he imagined, but of a prior; and who thus, out of regard to his own mother, was forced to prevent the condemnation of Merlin's.

At this time there reigned in Britain a king called Constans, who had three sons, Moines, Pendragon, and Uter. Moines, soon after his accession, which happened on the death of his father,

was vanquished by the Saxons, in consequence of being deserted by his seneschal Vortiger, formerly the chief support of his throne. Growing unpopular, through misfortune, he was soon after killed by his subjects, and the traitor Vortiger chosen in his place.

As the newly-elected monarch was in constant dread of the preferable claims of Uter and Pendragon, the surviving sons of Constantine, he began to construct a strong tower for defence. This bulwark, however, three times fell to the ground without any apparent cause, when brought by the workmen to a certain height. The king consulted seven *astronomers* on this phenomenon in architecture. These sages having studied the signs, avowed to each other that they could not solve the mystery. But in the course of their observations they had incidentally discovered that their lives were threatened by a child, who had lately come into the world without the intervention of a mortal father. They therefore resolved to deceive the king, in order to secure their own safety: and announced to him, as the result of their calculations, that the edifice would abide by the ordinary rules of architecture if the blood of a child of this genealogy were shed on the first stone of the foundation.

Though the king could not doubt the efficacy of

this prescription, his plans were not much promoted by the response, for the difficulty was to find a child of this anomalous lineage. That nothing, however, might be wanting on his part, he dispatched messengers over all the kingdom. Two of his emissaries fell in with certain children who were playing at cricket. Merlin was of the party, and, having divined the cause of their search, instantly made himself known to them. When brought before the king, he informed his majesty of the imposition of the astrologers, and showed that the instability of the tower was occasioned by two immense dragons who had fixed their residence under it, and, being rivals, shook its foundation with their mighty combats. The king invited all his barons to an ensuing contest announced by Merlin. Workmen having dug to an immense depth below the tower discovered the den of these monsters, who gratified the court with the exhibition that was expected. The red dragon was totally defeated by his white opponent, and only survived for three days the effects of this terrible encounter.

These animals, however, were not solely created for the amusement of the court, for, as Merlin afterwards explained, they typified in the most unequivocal manner the invasion of Uter and

Pendragon, the surviving brothers of Moines. These two princes had escaped into Britany on the usurpation of Vortiger, but now made a descent upon England. Vortiger was defeated in a great battle, and afterwards burned alive in the castle he had taken such pains to construct.

On the death of Vortiger, Pendragon ascended the throne. This prince had great confidence in the wisdom of Merlin, who became his chief adviser, and frequently entertained his master, while he astonished his brother Uter, who was not aware of his qualifications, by his skill in necromancy.

About this time a dreadful war arose between the Saxons and Britons. Merlin obliged the royal brothers to swear fidelity to each other, but predicted that one of the two must fall in the first battle. The Saxons were totally routed in the fight, and Pendragon, having fulfilled the prediction of Merlin, was succeeded by Uter, who now assumed, in addition to his own name, the appellation of Pendragon.

Merlin still continued a court favourite. At the request of Uter he transported by magic art enormous stones from Ireland to form the sepulchre of Pendragon; and next proceeded to Carduel (Carlisle), to prepare the Round Table, at which he

seated fifty or sixty of the first nobles in the country, leaving an empty place for the Sangreal.

Soon after this institution the king invited all his barons to the celebration of a great festival, which he proposed holding annually at Carduel.

As the knights had obtained permission from his majesty to bring their ladies along with them, the beautiful Yguerne accompanied her husband, the Duke of Tintadiel, to one of these anniversaries. The king became deeply enamoured of the duchess, and revealed his passion to Ulsius, one of his counsellors.¹ Yguerne withstood all the inducements which Ulsius held forth to prepossess her in favour of his master, and ultimately disclosed to her husband the attachment and solicitations of the king. On hearing this, the duke instantly removed from court with Yguerne, and without taking leave of Uter. The king complained of this want of duty to his council, who decided that the duke should be summoned to court, and if refractory should be treated as a rebel. As he refused to obey the citation, the king carried war into the estates of his vassal, and besieged him in the strong castle of Tintadiel, in which he had shut himself up. Yguerne was confined in a fortress at some

¹ See Appendix, No. VII.

distance, which was still more secure. During the siege, Ulsiús informed his master that he had been accosted by an old man, who promised to conduct the king to Yguerne, and had offered to meet him for that purpose on the following morning. Uter proceeded with Ulsiús to the rendezvous. In an old blind man, whom they found at the appointed place, they recognised the enchanter Merlin, who had assumed that appearance: he bestowed on the king the form of the Duke of Tintadiel, while he endowed himself and Ulsiús with the figure of his grace's two squires. Fortified by this triple metamorphosis, they proceeded to the residence of Yguerne, who, unconscious of the deceit, received the king as her husband.

The notion of this deception has been evidently suggested by the classical story of Jupiter and Alcmena. The duke corresponds to Amphytrion, and Merlin to the Mercury of mythology; while Arthur, who, as we shall find, was the fruit of the amour, holds the same rank in the romantic as Hercules in the heroic ages.

The fraud of Merlin was not detected, and the war continued to be prosecuted by Uter with the utmost vigour. At length the duke was killed in battle, and the king, by the advice of Merlin, espoused Yguerne. Soon after the marriage she gave

birth to Arthur, whom she believed to be the son of her former husband, as Uter had never communicated to her the story of his assumed appearance.

After the death of Uter, there was an interregnum in England, as it was not known that Arthur was his son. This prince, however, was at length chosen king, in consequence of having unfixed from a miraculous stone, a sword which two hundred and one of the most valiant barons in the realm had been singly unable to extract. At the beginning of his reign, Arthur was engaged in a civil war; as the mode of his election, however judicious, was disapproved by some of the barons, and when he had at length overcome his domestic enemies, he had long wars to sustain against the Gauls and Saxons.

In all these contests the art of Merlin was of great service to Arthur, as he changed himself into a dwarf, a harp player, or a stag, as the interest of his master required; or, at least, threw on the bystanders a spell to fascinate their eyes, and cause them to see the thing that was not. On one occasion he made an expedition to Rome, entered the king's palace in the shape of an enormous stag, and in this character delivered a formal harangue, to the utter amazement of one called Julius Cæsar,

not the Julius whom the knight Mars killed in his pavilion, but him whom Gauvain slew because he had defied king Arthur.

At length this renowned magician disappeared entirely from England. His voice alone was heard in a forest, where he was enclosed in a bush of hawthorn; he had been entrapped in this awkward residence by means of a charm he had communicated to his mistress Viviane, who, not believing in the spell, had tried it on her lover. The lady was sorry for the accident, but there was no extracting her admirer from his thorny coverture.

The earliest edition of this romance was printed at Paris, in three volumes folio, 1498; this impression, which has become extremely rare, was followed by another in quarto, which is much less esteemed than the other, but is also extremely scarce.

Though seldom to be met with, the *Roman de Merlin* is one of the most curious romances of the class to which it belongs. It comprehends all the events connected with the life of the enchanter from his supernatural birth to his magical disappearance, and embraces a longer period of interesting fabulous history, than most of the works of chivalry. Some of the incidents are entertaining, and no part of the narrative is complicated. Ygu-

erne, though she appears but for a short while, is a more interesting female character than is usually portrayed in romances of chivalry. The passion of Uter for this lady is well described, and is by much the most interesting part of the work. The marvellous pervades the whole production; but it is not carried to such an extravagant length as in the tales of the Round Table, by which it was succeeded. The language, which is very old French; is remarkable for its beauty and simplicity. Indeed, the work bears every where the marks of very high antiquity, though it is impossible to fix the date of its composition; it has been attributed to Robert de Borron, to whom so many other works of the nature have been assigned, but it is not known at what time this author existed, and indeed, he is believed by many, and particularly by Mr Ritson, to be entirely a fictitious personage.

But, great as the antiquity of the romance no doubt is, its author can lay but little claim to originality of invention. Most of the incidents appear in the chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth, from which they were transferred into the romance through the medium of the Brut, a metrical version of that fabulous history, written by Wace.

The notion of procreating demons, which forms

the basis of the romance, and accounts for Merlin's supernatural powers, seems to have been taken from the *Vita Merlini*, the Life of the Scotch Merlin, by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

" Et sibi multotiens ex aere corpore sumpto
 Nobis apparent, et plurima sæpe sequuntur;
 Quin etiam colta mulieres aggrediuntur,
 Et faciunt gravidas, generantes more profano."

It would appear from Jocelin's Life of St Kentegern, the account of whose birth resembles that of Merlin, that our grandmothers were frequently subject to nocturnal attacks of the nature described in the romance; "*audivimus, frequenter sumptis transfigiis puellarem pudicitiam expugnatam esse, ipsamque defloratam corruptorem sui minime nosse. Potuit aliquid hujusmodi huic puellae accidisse.*"¹ Yet, perhaps, the account of the birth and early part of the life of Merlin may be traced to a yet more ancient and venerable source.

At an early period the story of Merlin became current and popular in most of the countries in Europe. The French romance, of which we have given an abstract, was translated into Italian by

¹ Pinkerton *Vitæ Antiquæ*, p. 200. ap. Ellis's *Specimens*, p. 311. vol. i.

Antonio Tedeschi, a Venetian, and was written by him while in the prison of Florence, where he was confined for debt. The history of Merlin appeared also in English, in a metrical form, in which the incidents are nearly the same with those in the French romance.

Merlin is frequently introduced in the subsequent tales of chivalry, but it is chiefly on great occasions, and at a period subsequent to his death, or magical disappearance. He has also found his way into the English metrical version of the Seven Wise Masters. Herowdes, emperor of Rome, had seven sages in his council, who abused the confidence reposed in them by their master. This emperor, while one day preparing to go on a hunting party, is suddenly struck blind ;—the wise men are convoked, and ordered to account for his majesty's obstructed vision. They are forced to confess that they are unprepared with an answer, but are afterwards advised by an old man to consult the invisible Merlin. Two of their number are sent on the errand, who find out the enchanter with great difficulty, and bring him to the king. Merlin is prepared with a receipt, and informs him that nothing more is necessary to his complete restoration to sight, than striking off the heads of his seven sages. Herowdes, delighted to find that his

cure could be so cheaply purchased, caused his counsellors to be successively beheaded, and the recovery of his sight coincided with the decapitation of his last minister.

Nor have the fables connected with Merlin been confined to idle tales or romances of chivalry, but have contributed to the embellishment of the finest productions. In the romantic poems of Italy, and in Spenser, Merlin is chiefly represented as a magical artist. In the *Orlando Innamorato*, (l. 3), the fountain of love is said to have been formed by Merlin; and in the 26th canto of the *Orlando Furioso*, there is described a fountain of Merlin, one of four which he formed in France. It was of the purest marble, on which coming events were pourtrayed in the finest sculpture. In the same poem, Bradamante arrives one night at the lodge of Tristan (*Rocca di Tristano*), where she is conducted into a hall adorned with prophetic paintings, which demons had executed in a single night under the direction of Merlin.

In the third canto of the *Rinaldo*, the knight of that name arrives with Isolero at two equestrian statues; the one of Lancelot, the other of Tristan, both sculptured by the art of Merlin. Spenser represents Merlin as the artificer of the impenetrable shield, and other armour of Prince Ar-

thur (*Faery Queene*, b. i. c. 7), and of a mirror in which a damsel viewed her lover's shade. But Merlin had nearly obtained still higher distinctions, and was on the verge of being raised to the summit of fabulous renown. The greatest of our poets, it is well known, before fixing on a theme more worthy of his genius, intended to make the fabulous history of Britain the subject of an epic poem, as he himself announces in his *Epitaphium Damonis* :—

“ Ipse ego Dardania Rutupina per aequora puppes
Dicam, et Pandrasidos regnum vetus Iogenis,
Brennumque Arviragumque duces, priscumque Belinum,
Tum gravidam Arturo fatali fraude Iogernen,
Mendaces vultus assumptaque Gorlois arma
Merlini dolus——”

It has been mentioned, in the abstract that has been given of the romance of Merlin, that when the magician, who is the chief character in the work, prepared the round table at Carduel, he left a place vacant for the *Sangreal*, or holy blood. The early history of this relic, the quest of which is the most fertile source of the adventures of the knights of the Round Table, is related in the romance of the

SANGREAL, OR ST GRAAL.¹

This work is one of the duller of the class to which it belongs; it seems written with a different intention, and on a different plan, from the other romances of the Round Table, and has much the appearance of having come from the pen of an ecclesiastic. The name of the author, however, and the sources whence his composition was derived, are involved in the same darkness and inconsistent information, which obscure the origin of so many similar productions.

Mr Warton has given an extract from a metrical Sangreal, a fragment consisting of 40,000 lines, which was written by Thomas Lonelich, in the reign of Henry VI. This is neither the original, nor a paraphrase, of the French prose Sangreal, but is a version of that part of Lancelot du Lac which contains the adventures of the Sangreal.

¹ L'Histoire, ou le Roman du Saint-Greal, qui est le fondement et le premier de la Table Ronde; lequel traite de plusieurs matieres recreatives, ensemble la queste du dict Saint-Greal faite par Lancelot, Galaad, Boort et Perceval, qui est le dernier livre de la Table Ronde; traduit du Latin en Rime Francoise, et de Rime en Prose.

With regard to the history of the Sangreal, properly so called, we are informed in the *Bibliothèque des Romans*, that it was first written in verse by Chretien de Troyes, towards the end of the 12th century; that it was thence translated into Latin prose in the 13th, and, finally, in the 14th century, into French prose, by Gautier Map, by order, as he informs us, of his lord Henry, by whom, as he was an Englishman, the authors of the *Bibliothèque* suppose that he means Henry III. This, however, would place the composition not in the 14th, but in the preceding century, as that monarch died in 1272. Tyrwhit says there is a tradition that Gautier Map was the author of the *St Greal* in French. There is also a passage in the *Romanz* of Tristan which is consistent with this information. "Quant Boort ot conte l'aventure del Saint Graal, teles come eles estoient avenues, eles furent mises en escrit, gardees en lamere de Salibreres dont Mestre Galtier Map, l'estrest a faist sön livre du Saint Graal, per l'amor du Roy Herri, son senger qui fist l'estoire tralater del Latin en Romanz." From a passage, however, in *Lancelot du Lac*, we are led to believe that Map wrote it in Latin, while some modern writers have attributed the French work to Robert de Borron. Ritson, as has been already mentioned, considers

Borron as a fictitious personage, and ridicules the notion of Map having ever written a romance. At whatever time, and by whatever author written, the Sangreal was first printed in French prose, in 1516, two volumes folio, by Gallyot du Pré, and afterwards 1523, folio; both editions are so rare, that the Sangreal is the scarcest romance of the Round Table.

From the extract given by M. Barbazan, of the poetical Sangreal, it appears to commence with the genealogy of our Saviour, and to detail the whole of the Sacred History. The prose romance does not go so far back. It begins with Joseph of Arimathea, who was long believed in this country to have existed for many centuries after the crucifixion. Matthew Paris informs us, that an Armenian bishop who came to England in his time, related that this Jewish senator had dined at his table before he left the east. At the end of every century he fell into a fit of ecstasy, and when he recovered he returned to the same state of youth in which he was when his master suffered.

The author of the Sangreal has availed himself of this popular tradition;—he in the first place relates, that, on the day of the crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea obtained possession of the *Hanap*, or cup, from which his master had on the preceding

evening drunk with his apostles. Before he interred the body of our Saviour, he filled the vessel with the blood which flowed from his wounds ; but the exasperated Jews soon after deprived him of this holy relic, and sent him to a prison in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Here his departed master appeared to him, and comforted him in his captivity, by restoring the sacred *Hanap*. At length, in the forty-second year of his confinement, he was freed from prison by Titus, the Roman emperor. After his deliverance he proceeded to preach the gospel in this country, and on his way converted to Christianity, Enelach, king of Sarraz, who was thus enabled to conquer the Egyptians, with whom he was at war. After the arrival of Joseph with the sacred cup in Britain, the romance is chiefly occupied with the miracles accomplished by the Sangreal ;—the preparation of the Round Table by Arthur, who left a place vacant for this relic ; and, finally, the achievements performed by his knights to recover this treasure, which had fallen into the possession of King Pecheur, so called from his celebrity as an angler, or his notoriety as a sinner. The author of the romance has enlivened his story with some curious adventures, which happened to the knights of the Round Table, during the period of this quest ; but the incidents re-

lated are, I think, on the whole less interesting than those generally contained in the class of fiction with which we are at present engaged.

The history of the Sangreal is the commencement of a series of romances, in which the acquisition of that relic is a leading object. The story of its quest and attainment is continued in

PERCEVAL,²

a romance of the fifteenth century, where a great deal is written of its utility and final disappearance.

The early part of the romance, however, is merely the story of an artless and inexperienced youth's first entrance into the world. The father and two elder brothers of Perceval had fallen in

² *Le Roman de Vaillant Perceval, Chevalier de la Table Ronde, lequel acheva les adventures du Saint Greal, avec aucuns faits Belliqueux du Chevalier Gauvain et autres.* The only edition of this romance (which is very scarce), is Paris, 1580. Concerning the author and origin of this romance, see page 171. Besides the works on the subject of Perceval which are there mentioned, there is a metrical romance, *Percyvell of Galles*, which was preserved in the library of Lincoln cathedral, and is supposed to have been written by Robert de Thornton, in the reign of Henry VI.

tournaments or battle ; and hence, as the last hope of the family, he had been kept at home by his mother, who resided in Wales, where he was brought up in total ignorance of arms and chivalry.

At length, however, Perceval is roused to a desire of military renown, by meeting in a forest with five knights, who were in complete armour. When he has determined on leaving the family mansion, his mother gives him some curious instructions concerning the duties of a knight. After receiving these admonitions, he sets out for the court of Arthur, and on his way falls in with various adventures, in the course of which he makes some whimsical applications of the lessons of his mother.¹

On his arrival at Carduel, where Arthur then resided, he encounters a knight in red armour leaving the palace, and is asked by him where he is going, to which Perceval replies, " To King Arthur to ask your arms." In prosecution of this equitable claim, Perceval without farther ceremony enters on horseback into the hall, where Arthur is seated with his knights. This mode of entrance was common in the ages of chivalry. Stow men-

¹ See Appendix, No. VIII.

tions, that when Edward II. was sitting royally with his peers, solemnizing the feast of Pentecost, there entered a woman attired like a minstrel, sitting on a great horse trapped, who rode about the table showing pastime. In the legend of King Estmere, the prince of that name proceeds in a similar manner :—

“ King Estmere he stabled his steede
Sae fayre at the hall bord ;
The froth that came from his brydle bitte,
Light in Kyng Bremor's beard.”

Arthur at this time happened to be holding full court (Cour Pleniére). At the time in which Perceval was written, the French sovereigns, from whose customs the royal manners in these romances are frequently described, did not, as afterwards, maintain a court continually open, but lived shut up with their families and the officers of their household, and only displayed their magnificence on certain occasions, which occurred three or four times a year. These festivals are said to have owed their origin to the diets convoked by Charlemagne to deliberate on state affairs, and were re-established by Hugh Capet ;—they were announced by heralds at the town or

castle where they were to be celebrated,—the barons and strangers were invited, and the entertainment consisted in feasts and dancing, joined to the exercise of the talents of the minstrel.

It was on a solemn occasion of this nature, that Perceval behaved with the bluntness that has been described. Arthur, however, promises to make him a knight if he will dismount from his horse, and pay his vows to God and the saints. But Perceval would only receive the honour he solicited on horseback, because, as he said, the knights he met in the forest were not dismounted; and he added another condition to his reception into the order of knighthood, which was, that the king should grant him permission to acquire the arms of the red knight, who, it seems, was the mortal enemy of Arthur. On expressing his intention to gain them by his own valour, Lreux, the king's seneschal, who is introduced in most of the romances of the Round Table, but is always represented as a detractor, a coward, and a boaster, nearly resembling the character which Shakespeare has painted in so many of his dramas, begins to jeer Perceval. On this a damsel comes up to Perceval, and tells him, smiling, that if he live he will be one of the bravest and best of knights. Now the damsel had not smiled for ten years.

The seneschal, exasperated at the prospects held out to Perceval, gives the maiden a blow on the cheek; and, seeing the king's fool sitting near a chimney, kicks him into the fire between the two andirons, because the fool had been accustomed to say that this damsel would not smile till she had seen him who would be the flower of chivalry. A fool was a common appendage to the courts of those days in which this romance was written. This embellishment was derived from the Asiatic princes. In Europe, a fool was the ornament held in next estimation to a dwarf; his head was shaved, he wore a white dress with a yellow bonnet, and carried a bell or bawble in his hand. If, however, the scene which took place between the fool, the seneschal, and damsel, be a just picture of the manners of a court in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the presence of a king must in those days have inspired very little reverence.

Perceval having at length been knighted on his own terms, sets out in quest of the Red Knight, and obtains the arms he desired by slaying him in single combat; but, as he did not understand how to open or close a helmet, and knew nothing of the fabric of the other parts of armour, he would

have been much puzzled without the assistance of his squire, Guyon, who aids in arming him ; and also tries to persuade him to change his under dress for that of the knight he had slain. I will never, replied he, quit the good hempen shirt that my mother made me. Thus Perceval would only take the armour of the knight, and the squire is obliged to put the spurs over the gathers which his master would on no account part with. He then teaches him to put his foot in the stirrup, for Perceval had never used stirrup nor spur, but had rode without saddle, and urged on his horse with a stick. The squire then carries the news of Perceval's success to the court of Arthur, to the great joy of the fool, and consternation of the seneschal.

After this, chance (which does so much in all romances of chivalry); conducts Perceval to the house of a knight who instructs him in all the exercises and duties of his profession, and persuades him, though not without difficulty, to forsake his rustic garb for an attire more magnificent and warlike.

The romance of Perceval is almost the only one which relates the story of a raw and inexperienced countryman's first entrance into the world, and

his immediate admission into the order of knighthood. The heroes of the other romances are introduced to our acquaintance in the plenitude of their glory, or we follow them through their gradual initiation, while they are bred up among arms, and pass through the regular steps in their advancement to knighthood. The first pages of *Perceval* are also by much the most comic of the romances of the Round Table; in none of the other knights of Arthur do we meet with the same bluntness and *naïveté* as in the young Welshman.

After *Perceval* has been trained to the exercises of chivalry, and equipped in his military garb, the incidents of the romance bear a perfect resemblance to those of the other fabulous histories with which it has been classed,

Perceval, after leaving his instructor, arrives at the castle of Beaurepaire. Soon after his entrance he finds that it is blockaded by an enemy, and in the course of the day that it is reduced to extremities for want of provisions. *Blanchefleur*, the lady of the castle, makes up, in the best way in her power, for his bad entertainment at table, and he in return frees her from the besiegers, by overthrowing in single combat their chiefs, whom he sends prisoners to the court of Arthur, charging them to inform the smiling damsel that he

would avenge her of the blow she received from the seneschal.

Having raised the siege of Beautrepaire, Perceval proceeds to the residence of his uncle the King Pecheur. At his court he sees the Sangreal and sacred lance. The wounds which this prince received in his youth had never healed up. They would, indeed, have been cured had his nephew thought proper to ask certain questions concerning these relics, as what is the use of the Sangreal, and why does blood drop from the lance? These pertinent enquiries, however, do not suggest themselves; and by his want of curiosity he incurs, as we shall afterwards find, the displeasure of the Lady Hideous.

Leaving his unfortunate uncle unquestioned, Perceval sets out on his return to the court of Arthur, where he is preceded by many knights whom he vanquishes on his way, and sends thither as prisoners. On his arrival he takes vengeance on the seneschal Lreux, and accompanies Arthur to Carlion, where that prince holds a full court. During his stay there, he one day sees the Lady Hideous pass, who loads him with her maledictions. Her neck and hands, says the romance, were brown as iron, which was the least part of her ugliness—her eyes were blacker than those of a Moor, and little

in the shape of those of a mouse—she had the nose of a cat or an ape, and lips like an ox—her teeth were red, like the yolk of eggs—she was bearded like a goat, was humped before and behind, and had both legs twisted. This paragon makes her excuses to King Arthur for not tarrying at his court, as she had a long journey before her, but points out a castle where 570 knights, each with his lady, were retained in captivity.

The deliverance of these persons opens a vast field of enterprise, and the adventures of many knights, particularly of Gauvain, the nephew of Arthur, are related at great length.

Perceval dedicated himself for five years to exploits of chivalry, and neglected all exercises of devotion. He is at length reclaimed by meeting in a forest a procession of ten ladies and three knights, who were doing penance for past transgression, and were walking barefooted for the sake of mortification. Perceval is much edified by their conversation, and goes to confess himself to a hermit, who turns out to be his uncle, and the brother of King Pecheur.

From the hermitage Perceval sets out with the view of revisiting this piscatory monarch, and of propounding the proper interrogatories concerning the Sangreal. In wandering from wood to wood,

he comes again to the castle of Beaurepaire, in which, spite of his late conversion, he passes three days with Blanchefleur.

After having accomplished his visit to his uncle, whose wounds he at length heals up by his questions, Perceval returns to the court of Arthur. Soon after his arrival, intelligence is brought him of his uncle's death, who, it would appear, had only thriven by his infirmities. Arthur and all his court set out with Perceval for the kingdom of his deceased relative, to be present at the coronation. In succeeding to his sinful predecessor, Perceval also inherited a number of religious curiosities. Of these the chief was the Sangreal, whose wonders were manifested much to the satisfaction of Arthur and his barons: it appeared daily at the hour of repast in the hands of a lady, who carried it three times round the table, which was immediately replenished with all the delicacies the guests could desire.

Arthur returns to his usual residence, and Perceval, soon after his accession, retires to a hermitage, taking with him the Sangreal, which provided for his sustenance till the day of his death. The moment he expired, says the romance, the Sangreal, the sacred lance, and the silver trencher, were, in the presence of the attendants, carried up

to the holy heavens, and since that time have never any where been seen on earth.

Perceval, after his death was carried to the *Palais aventureux*, where he was buried by the side of the King Pecheur, and this epitaph was inscribed on his tomb :—Cy-Gît Perceval le Gallois, qui du Saint Greal les adventures acheva.

Many incidents of the life of Perceval are related in the other romances of the Round Table, especially in Lancelot de Lac, where a full account, but with considerable variation, is given of the early part of his career; he is brought to the court of Arthur by an elder brother; and a lady, who had not spoken, in place of not having smiled, for ten years, foretells his future eminence, and expires on having uttered the prediction.

But the chief difference is in the circumstances connected with the acquisition of the Sangreal; the conquest of which is a leading incident in

LANCELOT DU LAC,

and occupies a considerable portion of the romance. Hence it has been classed among the continuations of the history of the Sangreal; but the part which relates to the acquirement of that relic,

is by no means the most interesting in the work, nor that in which Lancelot himself has the greatest share. The account of the earliest part of his life is the most romantic, and his intrigue with Queen Genevra the most curious part of the composition.

King Ban of Britany was, in his old age, attacked by his enemy Claudas, a neighbouring prince, and after a long war was besieged in the strong-hold of Tribble, which was the only place that now remained to him, but was considered as an impregnable fortress. Being at length reduced to extremities, he departs from this castle with his wife Helen and his infant son Lancelot, in order to beg assistance from his suzerain King Arthur; and, meanwhile, entrusts the defence of Tribble to his seneschal. While prosecuting his route he ascends a hill, from the top of which he perceives his castle on fire, for it had been treacherously surrendered by the seneschal, who in romance is generally represented as a coward or traitor. At this sight the old man is struck with despair, and instantly expires. Helen, leaving her child on the brink of a lake, flies to receive the last sighs of her husband; on returning she perceives the little Lancelot in the arms of a nymph, who, on the approach of the queen, throws herself into the

lake with the child. Et quand la royne approcha des chevaulx, qu' estoient dessus le lac si voit son fils deslye hors du berceau, et une damoiselle qui le tient tout nud en son giron, et le estrainct et serre moult doucement entre ses deux mammelles, et luy baise souvent les yeulx et la bouche : car c' estoit l'ung des plus beaulx enfans de tout le monde. Et lors la Royne dist a la damoiselle. Belle douce amye, pour Dieu laissez mon enfant : car assez aura desormais de dueil et de mesaise : il est cheu en trop grand pourete et misere : car il a perdu toutes joyes. Son pere est orendroit mort et sa terre perdue qui n'estoit mye petite si Dieu la luy eust gardée. A chose que la Royne die la damoiselle ne repond ung seul mot. Et quant elle la voit approcher si se lieve a tout l' enfant, et s' en vient droictement au lac et joint les pieds et se lance dedans. La Royne voyant son fils dedans le lac se pisme incontinent.—V. 1. F. 4. recto. This nymph was Vivian, mistress of the enchanter Merlin, better known by the name of the Lady of the Lake. Lancelot received the name of Lac from having been educated at the court of this damsel, whose palace was situated in the midst, not of a real, but, like the appearance which deceives the African traveller, of an imaginary lake, whose deluding resemblance served as a barrier to

her residence. Here she dwelt not alone, but in the midst of a numerous retinue, and a splendid court of knights and damsels.

The queen, after her double loss, retired to a convent, where she was joined by the widow of Bohort, for this good king had died of grief on hearing of the death of his brother Ban. His two sons, Lyonel and Bohort, are rescued by a faithful knight called Farien, from the fury of Claudas. They arrive in the shape of greyhounds at the palace of the lake, where, having resumed their natural form, they are educated along with their cousin Lancelot.

When this young prince has attained the age of eighteen, the Lady of the Lake carries him to the court of Arthur, that he may be admitted to the honour of knighthood. On his first appearance he makes a strong impression on the heart of Geneura. The history of Arthur receives a singular colouring from the amours of his queen with Lancelot. It is for her sake that the young knight lays whole cargoes of tributary crowns at the feet of her husband; for her he accomplishes the conquest of Northumberland, where he takes the castle of Douloureux Garde (Berwick), afterwards, under the name of Joyeuse Garde, the favourite residence and burying place of the knight. In com-

pliment to Geneura, he attacks and defeats King Gallehaut, who afterwards becomes his chief confidant, and brings about the first stolen interview between his friend and Geneura. It is even at the suggestion of this queen that he excites Arthur and his knights to a long war of vengeance against Claudas, the usurper of his own dominions. When Arthur, too, deceived by the artifices of a woman, who insisted that she was the real Geneura, repudiates his queen, who is thus at liberty to indulge, without restraint, her passion for Lancelot, the knight is not satisfied; he deems it necessary for the dignity of his mistress that she should be restored to the throne of Britain, and that, protected in her reputation by the cloak of marriage and the sword of her lover, she should pass her life in reputable adultery. Hence a great proportion of his exploits are single combats, undertaken in defence of the innocence of his mistress, in which his success is usually greater than he was entitled to from the justice of his cause. To Geneura, too, on the most trying occasions his fidelity remains inviolate. Witness the indignation he expresses at having been betrayed into the embraces of a damsel, who inconsiderately assumed the character of Geneura. *Trop durement damoyselle m'avez vous mocque; mais vous en mourrez; car Je ne vueil pas que ja-*

mais decevez Chevalier en telle maniere comme vous m'avez deceu. Lors dressa l'espée contre-mont, et la damoyzelle qui grant paour avoit de mourir luy cria mercy a jointes mains, en luy disant ; haa franc Chevalier ne m'occiez mye, pour celle pitié que Dieu eut de Marie Magdaleine. Si s'arresta tout pensif—si la veit la plus belle que oncques avoit veu ; et il trembloit si durement d'yre et de malalent que a peine pouoit il tenir son espee, et pensoit s' il occiroit, ou si il la laisseroit vivre. Et continuellement la damoyzelle luy crioit mercy ; et estoit devant luy toute nue en sa chemise a genoulx : et luy en regardant sa viz et sa bouche, en quoy il avoit tant de beaulté, luy dist. —Damoyzelle, Je m'en yrai tout vaincu et tout recreant comme celluy qui ne s'ose de veus venger, car trop seroye cruel et desloyal si si grant beaulte destruisoye. A more convincing proof of his fidelity, however, is exhibited in his reply to a damsel who makes to him an explicit declaration of love. Ma volonté y est si bien enracinée que Je n' auroye pas le couriage de l' en oter. Mon cueur y est nuyt et jour, car mon cueur ne mes yeux ne tendent tous jours fors celle part, ne mes oreilles ne peuvent ouyr bonnes nouvelles que d'elle. Que vous dirois—mon ame et mon corps sont tous a elle. Ainsi suis Je tout a son plaisir,

ne Je ne puis rien faire de moy, non plus que le serf peut faire autre chose que son seigneur luy commande.

Nor does Lancelot merely signalise his attachment by the preservation of his fidelity, or engaging in those enterprises which were congenial to the feelings of a knight, but submits to disgraces which no one of his profession could endure ; thus, for the purpose of overtaking Geneura when a horse could not be procured, he ascends a cart, the greatest infamy to which a knight could be subjected : en ce temps la estoit accoustumée que Charrette estoit si vile que nul n'estoit dedans qui tout loz et tout honneur n'eust perdu : et quant s'inveuloit a aucun tollir honneur si le faisoit s'en monter en une Charrette : Car Charrette servit, en ce temps la, de ce que Pilloris servent orendroit ; ne en chascune bonne ville n'en avoit, en ce temps la, que une.

At length the intrigue of Lancelot and Geneura is detected by the fairy Morgain, the sister of Arthur, and revealed to that prince by her and Agravain, one of the knights of the Round Table, for a vassal would have become criminal had he concealed any thing from his lord. After this detection Lancelot sustains a long war against Arthur and his knights, first in his castle of Joyeuse Garde,

and afterwards in his states of Britany. Arthur is recalled from the prosecution of this contest by the usurpation of Mordrec ; and as he disappears after the battle which he fights with this unnatural son, he is believed to have been slain with the rest of his chivalry.¹ Geneura, as if she thought pleasure only gratifying while criminal, retires to a convent. Lancelot having arrived in Britain after the battle, retires to a hermitage, and is joined in his solitude by his brother Hector of Mares, the only other knight of the Round Table who had survived the fatal battle with Mordrec.

Thus, although Lancelot du Lac is not free from the defect (common to all the romances of the Round Table) of a want of unity in the action, there is yet one ruling passion that animates the romance. The unconnected adventures of the Duke of Clarence, as well as those of Lyonel and Boort, the two cousins of Lancelot, are, indeed, related at full length, and the fourth part of the romance is principally occupied by the quest of the Sangreal, in which Lancelot acts only a subordinate part ; but as far as he himself is chiefly concerned, his passion for Geneura is the ruling principle by which all his actions are guided, and the main-spring of

¹ See Appendix, No. IX.

the incidents of the romance. The adventures of the principal character, indeed, are too much of the same cast; he is too often taken prisoner, and too often rescued; his fits of insanity are also too frequently repeated. Lancelot, however, has been perhaps the most popular of all the romances of the Round Table. On the French playing cards one of the knaves bears the name of Lancelot; a proof of the estimation in which the work was held at the time this game was invented.

There is a metrical romance on the subject of Lancelot, entitled *La Charette*, which was begun by Chrestien de Troyes in the twelfth century, and finished by Geoffrey de Ligny. This work is more ancient than the prose Lancelot, but, as the incidents are different, it cannot be regarded as the original of that composition. Mr Warton, and the authors of the *Bibliothèque*, seem to agree in thinking that the work, of which I have given the above abstract, was originally written in Latin, but Warton ascribes the French version to Robert de Borron, on the authority of a MS. *Lancelot du Lac*, where it is said to be—*mis en Francois par Robert de Borron par le comandement de Henri Roi d'Angleterre*. This manuscript, however, is not the same with the printed Lancelot. In one passage of

the Bibliothèque the composition of the prose romance of Lancelot is attributed to Gualtier Map, who is also mentioned as the French author in the preface to *Meliadus*, *Ce n'est mye de Lancelot car Maistre Gualtier Map en parla assez suffisamment en son livre*. The authors of the Bibliothèque have elsewhere attributed *Lancelot du Lac* to Gasse le Blond, a mistake which seems to have arisen from a misconception of a passage in the same preface, where it is said that he was the author of the adventures of Lancelot, but it means of those connected with this hero, which are related in the romance of *Tristan*. Whoever may have been the author of *Lancelot*, it was first printed at Paris in 1494, which is considered as the best edition : it afterwards appeared in 1513, and lastly in 1533, which is held in higher estimation than the impression by which it was immediately preceded. In all the editions the romance is divided into five parts, the last of which is the origin of the celebrated metrical romance *Morte Arthur*. The English prose work of that name was written by Malory, and printed by Caxton in 1485. Mr Ritson imagines that the English metrical romance of *Morte Arthur* was versified from the prose one of the same title, but as it differs essentially from Malory's prose work, and agrees exactly with the

last part of the French romance of Lancelot, it is more probable that it has been versified from this composition. To Malory, Spenser was greatly indebted, as has been shown by Mr Warton at much length in his remarks on that poet's imitations of the old romances, where he also attempts to prove that Ariosto borrowed from Lancelot du Lac the notion of Orlando's madness, of his enchanter Merlin, and of his magic cup.

The fairy Morgana, who is a principal character in this romance, and discovered to Arthur the intrigue of his wife with Lancelot, is a leading personage not only in other tales of chivalry, but also in the Italian poems. In the *Orlando Furioso* (c. 43) she convinces her brother of the infidelity of his queen, by means of a magical horn. About a fifth part of the *Orlando Innamorato*, beginning at canto thirty-six, is occupied with the Fata Morgana. She is there represented as dispensing all the treasures of the earth, and as inhabiting a splendid residence at the bottom of a lake. Thither Orlando penetrates, and forces her to deliver up the knights she retained in captivity, by seizing her by a lock of hair, and conjuring her in the name of her master Demogorgon. She thus became a well-known character in Italy, where the name of Fata Morgana is given to that strange and

almost incredible vision which, in certain states of the tide and weather, appears on the sea that washes the coast of Calabria. Every object at Reggio is then a thousand times reflected on a marine mirror, or, when vapours are thick, on a species of aerial skreen, elevated above the surface of the water, on which the groves and hills and towers are represented as in a moving picture. (Swinburne's *Travels*, v. i. p. 365. Houel *Voyage Pittoresque des Isles de Sicile*, &c. v. ii. p. 2.)

We have now discussed the romances which have been considered as relating more particularly to the matter of the Sangreal. The family history of the princes of Leonnoys, which is comprised in the romances of Meliadus and Tristan, who were knights of the Round Table, and contemporary with Arthur, and of their descendant Isaië le Triste, is next to be considered.

The country of Leonais, or Leonnoys, of which Meliadus was king, and which was the birth-place of Tristan, though once contiguous to Cornwall, has now disappeared, and is said to be more than forty fathoms under water. An account of it has been fished up by Carew in his *Survey of Cornwall*, and has been quoted in the notes to Way's *Fabliaux*:—"The sea gradually encroaching on the shore hath ravined from Cornwall the whole

tract of country called *Lionnesse*, together with divers other parcels of no little circuite ; and that such a country as *Lionnesse* there was, these proofs are yet remaining. The space between the Lands-End and the isles of Scillee, being about thirteen miles, to this day retaineth that name, in Cornish Lethowsow, and carrieth continually an equal depth of 40 or 60 fathom, (a thing not usual in the seas proper dominion), save that about the midway there lieth a rocke, which at low water discovereth its head. They term it the gulphe, suiting thereby the other name of Scilla. Fishermen also, casting their hooks thereabouts, have drawn up pieces of doors and windows."

Of the romances relating to the heroes of the country which has been thus overflowed, the first in the order of events, though not the earliest written, is

MELIADUS OF LEONNOYS,¹

which was printed at Paris 1528. Rusticien de Pise, the original author of this romance, com-

¹ *Meliadus de Leonnoys* : du present volume sont contenus les nobles faicts d'armes du vaillant Roy *Meliadus de Leonnoys* : ensemble plusieurs autres nobles proesses de cheva-

mences his prologue by returning thanks to the Trinity, for having enabled him to finish the romance of Brut, and to have thus acquired the favour of King Henry of England, whom his work had so greatly pleased that he had ordered him to write another of the same sort, because his former one had not contained every thing relating to the subject. "In this book, therefore," says he, "will be contained whatever is wanting in Brut, and the other works extracted from the matter of the Sangreal." After this formidable declaration, in order to give an appearance of authenticity to his fables, he talks of his labour in translating from the Latin; he also dwells with much complacency on his writings, and informs us that he had received two castles from King Henry as a reward for them. He then declines interfering with the adventures of Lancelot, as Gualtier Map had said enough of them; or of Tristan, as he himself had treated that subject in the Brut. King Henry having shown a predilection for Palamedes, who, we shall find, is a principal character in the romance

lerie faictes tant par le Roy Artus, Palamedes, le Morhoult d'Irlande, le bon Chevalier sans paour, Galehault le Brun, Segurades, Galaad que autres bons chevaliers estans au temps du dit Roy Meliadus.—Histoire singuliere et Recreative nouvellement imprimée a Paris—chez Galliot du Pre.

of Meliadus, Rusticien wisely resolved to gratify the humour of a monarch, who remunerated the compilation of old wives' tales with a couple of castles.

Mr Scott is of opinion, that this prodigal king was Henry I. This it is difficult to determine, as the prologue is the only part of the composition which has reached us in its original form. The romance of Meliadus is only extant as corrected by a more modern author, who must nevertheless have lived at a very remote period. It is this *Redacteur*, as he is termed, who acquaints us in his preface that Rusticien de Pise was the name of his predecessor. He also informs us, that he himself laboured by order of Edward King of England, but what Edward he has left to conjecture, which has fixed on the fourth monarch of that name. He bestows much commendation on the original author, but complains bitterly of his not having been sufficiently explicit on the subject of his hero's genealogy. This deficiency it was then fortunately too late to supply, so that the romance, at least in its corrected form, begins with the adventures that happened in England to two Babylonish hostages, who had been sent by their own monarch to Rome, and had been allowed by the emperor to pass on their parole into Britain. They

visited Arthur at Lramalot (Winchester), which was the next city to London, and the favourite residence of that prince, on account of the fine rivers and woods by which it was surrounded. Some curious notions are given in this part of the romance concerning the manners of the court, and form of the government of this fabulous monarch.

During the stay of the Babylonians at the court of Arthur, a romantic story occurs of a knight who arrives incognito in a vessel, and defies all the companions of the Round Table, but is severely wounded in a combat with one of their number. Arthur receives this unknown knight in his palace, and treats him with kindness, even after he discovers that the stranger is Pharamond, king of Franks, his mortal enemy.

After he is cured of his wounds, the French king embarks for his own country;—he sails down a stream, and enjoys a favourable breeze till he comes to the mouth of the river. There a storm arising, he lands and reposes himself by the side of a fountain, which was surrounded by a grove of pines, and where the grass was green and abundant. When refreshed, he sends to demand joust from Trarsin, the lord of the territory, a brave but felonious knight. This adversary he speedily overthrows; but afterwards encounters Morhault, or

Morhault, of Ireland, a celebrated character in the romances of the Round Table, and by him he is in turn defeated. After the combat, these opponents, who were unknown to each other, mutually recounted their adventures; and, while thus engaged, a damsel arrived to inform Morhault that her lady, who was the wife of Trarsin, and the most beautiful woman in the kingdom, expected him to an interview. This, however, was a snare laid by the husband, who had suspected his wife's infidelity, and had bribed the damsel to bring Morhault into his power. A punishment is prepared for the lovers, which seems to have suggested to Tasso the situation in which he places Olindo and Sophronia, in the 2d book of the Jerusalem. Brehus, who afterwards received the surname of Pitiless, attempts to rescue the lovers, but in vain. After his failure in this trial, while ranging through a forest he meets Yvain, the nephew of Arthur, with a lady in his company.¹ Brehus kills the lady, owing to the hatred he had conceived against the fair sex, on account of the damsel who had betrayed Morhault. A combat ensued between Brehus and Yvain, who could not be persuaded of the justice of this retaliation. When both are

¹ See Appendix, No. X.

nearly exhausted with fighting, the Knight without Fear arrives on the spot, and with Brehus again proceeds to attempt the rescue of Morhoult. This is at length effected, and Morhoult carries off the lady from Trarsin; but, when he had travelled a short way, he was met and vanquished by Meliadus, who restored the lady to her husband, after having exacted a promise that he would use her well for the future, and cease to interrupt her galantries.

This is the first appearance of the hero of the romance, though the preceding part occupies 29 chapters of the 173, which constitute the whole work. Meliadus again vanishes, and we hear little more of him till the 48d chapter. The intervening sections are chiefly filled with the exploits of Morhoult and of the Knight without Fear. Afterwards, however, Meliadus enters on a long series of adventures, chiefly warlike, of which the principal is the deliverance of Arthur and his companions from the castle of the rock. At the end of twenty chapters, entirely occupied with "tournaments and trophies hung," the reader is pleased, though it redounds little to the honour of the hero, to meet with a love story, which the author has introduced at the 68th chapter. Meliadus, in the course of his wanderings, meets

with the queen of Scotland in a castle, where he was entertained, and becomes deeply enamoured of her. He returns to his own country in a languishing state of health, and imparts the story of his love to one of his knights, who undertakes to acquaint the queen with his passion, and to repeat to her a lay which his master had written, expressive of his sentiments. Meliadus afterwards prosecutes his suit personally, with the utmost success, at the court of Arthur, where his mistress then resided; till the king of Scotland being informed of the intrigue, surprised Meliadus with his queen; but promised him, *qu' il ne feroit aucun mal a la reine pour chose qu' il eut vue*. The king thought it prudent, however, to depart from court with his wife; but on his way to Scotland he was surprised by Meliadus, and the queen was carried off. On account of this outrage, Arthur declares war against Meliadus. This prince, in consequence, retires to his own states, whence he describes his situation, and demands aid from Pharamond, in a poetical epistle, and is promised assistance in a similar form. A long account is given of the contest carried on in Leonnoys; Meliadus is taken prisoner, and the war concludes, in the 106th chapter, with the surrender of his capital and redelivery of the queen of Scotland to her husband.

Meliadus amused himself, while in confinement, with playing on the harp, and composing songs, particularly a lay, entitled, *Dueil sur Dueil*, which, the romance informs us, was the second that ever was written. He was allowed to solace himself in this manner till Arthur, being attacked by the Saxons, freed him from prison, in order to avail himself of his assistance in his contest with these enemies, which is, at length, terminated by Meliadus overthrowing Arioahan, the chief of the Saxons, in single combat.

In more regular works of fiction, the late appearance of the hero would, no doubt, be considered as a blemish ; but in few of the ancient romances of chivalry is unity of action and interest, or any other rule of art, accurately attended to. Meliadus is destitute, however, of the principal charm of works of this nature,—a variety of enchantments, of giants, and of monsters, which are the only embellishments that can compensate for the want of regularity and the breach of all the laws of composition.

Towards the conclusion, the romance is occupied with the exploits of the son of Meliadus, whose adventures are the subject of a separate romance, called

TRISTAN,¹

from the name of its hero. This composition has been the most popular of all the romances of the Round Table, and is considered as the work which best characterises the ancient spirit of French chivalry. It was first printed at Rouen, 1489, one volume folio; afterwards in two volumes folio at Paris, by Verard, without date, and again at the same place in 1522 and 1569. The date of its composition, however, is many centuries prior to that of its first publication.

The story of Tristan seems to have been current from the earliest times. It was the subject of a number of metrical tales in the romance language, which were versified by the French minstrels from ancient British authorities. From these original documents, or from the French metrical tales, was compiled the *Sir Tristrem*, attributed to Thomas of Erceldoune, and which has been edited by Mr. Scott. There are also extant two fragments of

¹ *Roman de noble et vaillant Chevalier Tristan, fils du noble roi Meliadus de Leonnoys, compilé par Luce Chevalier, Seigneur de Chasteau de Gast.*

metrical versions, which are supposed to be parts of one whole work, written by Raoul de Beauvais, who lived in the middle of the 13th century. But the immediate original of the prose *Tristan* is understood to be the metrical history of Mark and Yseult, written in verse by Chrestien de Troyes, who flourished early in the 12th century. The MSS. of this work have not reached us, but the prose composition of which it is the original, is of a date not long posterior, as it appeared about the middle of the twelfth century, the age of Lewis le Gros in France, and of Henry I. or Stephen in England;—a period when chivalry shone with its brightest lustre. Mr Scott believes that the author of the prose *Tristan* is the same with the earliest writer of *Meliadus*, who was certainly Rusticien de Pise. The author of *Tristan* informs us at the beginning of the romance, which, however, is no evidence, that his name is Luce Sieur de Gast, “I, Luce Seigneur de Gast have compiled the authentic history of *Tristan*; who, next to Lancelot and Galaad, was the most renowned knight of the Round Table.” Mr Warton attributes it to the same author, on the authority of a title-page, in a MS. copy of the romance—*Le Roman de Tristan et Iseult traduit de Latin en Francois, par Lucas Chevalier du Gast, pres de Sarisberi, Anglois.* In the preface to Me-

liadus, we are informed that it was begun by this Lucas de Gast, or Lucès de Iau, as he is there called, the first who extracted from the matter of the St Greal; that Gasse le Blond next wrote the part which relates to Lancelot, after which the story was taken up by Robert de Borron. Aussi Lucès de Iau translate, en langue Francoise, une partie de l'Hystoire de Monseigneur Tristan, et moins assez que il ne deust. Moulz commença bien son livre, et si ny mist tous les faicts de Tristan, ains la greigneur partie. Apres s'en entremist Messire Gasse le blanc qui estoit parent au Roy Henri, et devisa l'Hystoire de Lancelot du Lac, et d'autre chose ne parla'il mye grandement en son livre. Messire Robert de Borron s'en entremist et Helye de Borron, par la priere du dit Robert de Borron.

The early part of the prose romance of *Tristan* is occupied with an account of the ancestors of the hero;—many generations pass successively in review before the birth of *Meliadus*. This prince was married to *Isabella*, sister of *Marc*, king of *Cornwall*;—a fairy fell in love with him, and drew him away by enchantment, while he was engaged in the exercise of hunting. His queen set out in quest of him, but was seized with the pains of child-birth during her journey, and expired soon

after having given birth to a son, whom, from the melancholy circumstances of his birth, she called Tristan before her death.

Gouvernéil, the queen's squire, who had accompanied her, took charge of the child, and restored him to his father, who at length burst the enchantment of the fairy, and returned to his capital.

A dwarf having prophesied to Marc, the uncle of Tristan, that he would be dethroned by means of his nephew, this monarch vowed the death of Tristan. The emissaries he employed surprised and slew Meliadus during a chase, but Gouvernéil saved his son, and conveyed him to the court of Pharamond. As the young prince grew up, Belinda, the daughter of this French monarch, became enamoured of him; but, her passion being discovered by her father, Tristan found it necessary to leave the court.

A reconciliation was now effected between Tristan and his uncle Marc, who, at this time, resided at the castle of Tintagel, rendered famous by the amour of Uter and Yguerne. In this court, Tristan became expert in all the exercises incumbent on a knight. Nor was it long till he had an opportunity of practically exhibiting his valour and skill. The celebrated Morhoul, brother to the queen of Ireland, arrived to demand tribute from

Marc. Tristan encountered this warrior, who was forced to fly and embark, bearing with him a mortal wound. This was the first, and perhaps the most glorious, of the exploits of Tristan; but the lance of Morhoulth had been poisoned, and a wound his opponent had received grew daily more envenomed. He departed from Cornwall, with the view of finding in a foreign country the relief which could not be obtained in his own. A breeze of fifteen days continuance conveyed him to the coast of Ireland. He was ignorant to what shore he had been carried, for he seems to have steered at random: he disembarked, however, on this unknown country, tuned his harp, and began to play. It was a summer evening, and the king of Ireland and his daughter, the beautiful Yseult, were at a window which overlooked the sea. The strange harper was conveyed to the palace, and his wounds were cured by Yseult. But after his recovery, from the circumstance of wearing the sword of Morhoulth, he was found out to be the person who killed that knight, and was in consequence obliged to quit the country.

On his return to Cornwall, Tristan fell in love with the wife of Segurades, a Cornish nobleman, and followed her into the dominions of Arthur,

whither she had been carried by Bliomberis. While in England he defeated a knight called Blaamor, who had accused the king of Ireland of treason, before the court of Arthur. The king was thus acquitted of the charge. Tristan, at his request, accompanied him to Ireland, where he finally yielded to the solicitations of his champion, and promised to bestow his daughter Yseult in marriage on the king of Cornwall. The mother of Yseult gave to her daughter's confidant, Brangian, an amorous potion, to be administered on the night of her nuptials. Of this beverage, Tristan and Yseult, during their voyage to Cornwall, unfortunately partook. Its effects were quick and powerful : nor was its influence less permanent than sudden ; but, during the remainder of their lives, regulated the affections and destiny of the lovers. A medical potion, producing a temporary love, or rather passion, is said to have been frequently composed ; but the power of the beverage quaffed by Tristan and Yseult was not believed to be confined to its immediate effects, nor to derive its power from stimulating ingredients, but was supposed to continue its influence by the force of magic, through the lives of those who shared in the draught. Nor was the belief in such philtres the offspring of the middle ages : rules for their

composition are to be found in every author who treats of physics, from Pliny's Natural History, to the works of the 17th century.

In the course of a delightful, though unprosperous voyage, Tristan and Yseult arrive on an unknown island, where they are detained as prisoners, along with a number of knights and damsels, who had previously landed. But the uncourteous customs of this castle being destined to end, when it should be visited by the bravest knight and finest woman in the world, Tristan is enabled, by overcoming a giant, to effect the deliverance of the captives, after which he becomes the friend of Gallehault, the lord of the manor.

After the arrival of Tristan and Yseult in Cornwall, and the nuptials of the latter with King Marc, an uneasiness arises lest the husband should discover the deficiencies of his bride. Brangian, the confidant of Yseult, who had never committed the fault which occasioned the embarrassment of her mistress, agreed, by a deception frequently practised in the romances of chivalry, to occupy her place for a single night. Marc being thus guarded from suspicion, the provident Yseult, to escape the possibility of detection, delivered her late substitute to two ruffians, who had orders to

murder her in a wood. The assassins, having somewhat more mercy than their fair employer, leave their commission unexecuted, and only tie her to a tree, whence she is soon released by Palamedes.

After this, a great part of the romance is occupied with the contrivances of Tristan, and the tender Yseult, to procure secret interviews, which are greatly furthered by Dinas, Marc's seneschal.

Tristan, at a time when he was forced to leave Cornwall, on account of the displeasure of his uncle, was wounded one day while sleeping in a forest, with a poisoned arrow, by the son of a person he had killed. The ladies of those days, and particularly Yseult, were very skilful leeches; but to return to Cornwall in the present circumstances was impossible. He was, therefore, advised to repair to Britany, where Yseult with the White Hands was as celebrated for her surgical operations, as Yseult of Cornwall. Tristan was cured by this new Yseult, and married her, more out of gratitude than love, if we may judge from his apathy after the nuptials.¹ He employed himself solely in building a vessel in which he might sail to Cornwall, and at length embarked, on receiving a message from the queen of that country; but was

¹ See Appendix, No. XI.

driven by a tempest on the coast of England, near the forest of Darnant, where he delivered King Arthur from the power of the Lady of the Lake. After a number of adventures he reached Cornwall, accompanied by Pheredin, his wife's brother, whom he had made the confidant of his passion, and who had followed him through the whole course of this expedition. These friends had no sooner arrived in Cornwall, than Pheredin became enamoured of the queen. Tristan was seized with a fit of jealousy, retired to a forest, and went mad. After many acts of extravagance and folly, he allowed himself to be conducted to court, where he was soon restored to reason by the attention of Yseult. But, on his recovery, the jealousy of Marc revived, and he was compelled to take a solemn oath that he would leave Cornwall for ever.

Tristan proceeded to the dominions of Arthur, which again became the theatre of unnumbered exploits. But the jealousy of Marc was not extinguished by the absence of Tristan; he set out for England with a view of treacherously killing his nephew, and in his progress through the kingdom made himself ridiculous by that cowardice for which most of the knights of Cornwall were notorious. At the court of Arthur he became the laughing-stock of all the knights, by flying before

Daguenet, the king's fool, whom he mistook for Lancelot du Lac. While there, however, Arthur effected a reconciliation between him and Tristan, and, after their return to Cornwall, Tristan delivered that kingdom from the invasion of the Saxons, by whom it had been brought to the verge of ruin. Marc, however, behaved with signal ingratitude, for his jealousy being again awakened, he threw Tristan into prison. He was freed by an insurrection of the people of Cornwall, and in turn shut up Marc in the same prison in which he had been himself confined. Tristan took this opportunity of eloping with the queen of Cornwall, to the dominions of Arthur, where he resided at Joyeuse Garde, the favourite castle of Lancelot, and which that knight assigned the lovers as their abode, till Arthur again reconciled all parties. Marc was then delivered from prison, and restored to the enjoyment of his rebellious kingdom and his fugitive spouse.

Tristan returned to Britany and to his long-neglected wife. Soon after his arrival, information was brought that the Count of Nantes had thrown off his allegiance to Runalen, brother of the white-handed Yseult, who had lately succeeded his father in the duchy of Britany. Tristan defeated the rebels, but while mounting a tower by a scaling lad-

der, he was struck to the ground by a stone thrown by one of the garrison, and severely wounded.

It was during the attendance of Yseult on Tristan, that she first became his wife in the tenderest sense of the term. The Count de Tressan in his extract, has represented this late fulfilment of his obligations, as the primary cause of the death of Tristan; but, in reality, he recovered from his wound and its consequences, and forgot Yseult of Brittany, and the white hands, who was now doubly his own, in the arms of Yseult of Cornwall. He had obtained admission to the palace of Marc in the disguise of a fool, and had many secret interviews with the queen; but, being at length discovered, he was forced to return to Brittany.

Runalen, the brother-in-law of Tristan, was at this time engaged in an intrigue; Tristan had assisted him in forging false keys to enter the castle of the knight, with whose lady he was enamoured, and even consented to accompany him to a rendezvous which the lady had appointed; Tristan had already retired, when the husband unexpectedly returned from the chace. Runalen and Tristan escaped in the first instance, but were pursued and overtaken by the husband and his people; Runalen was killed, and Tristan received a wound from a poisoned weapon. Of the physicians who at-

tended him, an obscure doctor from Salerno was the only one who understood his case; but the other physicians insisted on his dismissal, and Tristan was soon reduced by their remedies to the lowest ebb. In this situation, as a last resource, he dispatched a confidant to the queen of Cornwall, who was so celebrated for her surgical skill, to try if he could persuade her to accompany him to Britany. If his endeavours should be successful, he ordered him, on his return, to display a white sail, and a black one if his persuasions were fruitless;—an idea which every one will trace to a classic and mythological origin. The messenger arrived in Cornwall in the character of a merchant; in this disguise he had an early opportunity of seeing the queen, and persuaded her, in the absence of Marc, to return with him to Britany.

Meanwhile Tristan awaited the arrival of the queen with such impatience, that he employed one of his wife's damsels to watch at the harbour, and report to him when the black or white sail should appear over the wave. Yseult, who was not in the secret, demanded the reason of this perpetual excubation, and was, for the first time, informed that Tristan had sent for the queen of Cornwall. It was but lately that this white-handed bride had learned the full value of a husband,

and the jealousy to which she had hitherto been a stranger took possession of her soul.

Now the vessel which bore the queen of Cornwall is wafted towards the harbour by a favourable breeze, all its white sails unfurled. Yseult, who was watching on the shore, flew to her husband, and reported that the sails were black. Tristan, penetrated with inexpressible grief, exclaimed, "Haa doulce amye a Dieu vous command—Jamais ne me veerez, ne moy vous. A Dieu je vous salue. Lors bat sa cœulpe, et se commande a Dieu, et le cueur luy creve, et l'ame s'en va."

The account of the death of Tristan was the first intelligence the queen of Cornwall heard on landing. She was conducted almost insensible into the chamber of Tristan, and expired holding him in her arms; "lors l'embrasse de ses bras tant comme elle peut, et gette ung souspir, et se pasme sur le corps; et le cueur lui part et l'ame s'en va."

Tristan, before his death, had requested that his body should be sent to Cornwall, and that his sword, with a letter he had written, should be delivered to King Marc. The remains of Tristan and Yseult were embarked in a vessel, along with the sword, which was presented to the king of

Cornwall. He was melted with tenderness when he saw the weapon which slew Morholt of Ireland, which so often saved his life, and redeemed the honour of his kingdom. In the letter Tristan begged pardon of his uncle, and related the story of the amorous petition.

Marc ordered the lovers to be buried in his own chapel. From the tomb of Tristan there sprung a plant, which went along the walls, and descended into the grave of the queen. By order of Marc it was cut down three times, but every morning the obdurate vegetable sprung up more verdant than before, and this miracle has ever since shaded the tombs of Tristan and Yseult.

Such plants are common in the old ballads. The Scotch ballad, Lord Thomas and Fair Annet, concludes,

“ Lord Thomas was buried without kirk wa’,
 Fair Annet within the quiere ;
 And o’ the tane thair grew a birk,
 The other a bonny briere,
 And ay they grew, and ay they threw,
 As they would fain be near.”—*Percy’s Relics.*

The same stanzas, with some verbal alterations, conclude Prince Robert, published in the Min-

strelsy of the Border; and we have plants of similar powers of sympathy and vegetation in the wild and romantic ballad of the Douglas Tragedy.

The fabulous history of Tristan has generally been considered as the most beautiful of the romances of the Round Table. "The character of Palamedes, (says Mr Scott) the despairing adorer of Yseult, is admirably contrasted with that of Tristan, his successful rival. Nor is there a truer picture of the human mind, than the struggles between the hatred of rivalry, and the chivalrous dictates of knightly generosity, which alternately sway both the warriors. The character of Dinadan, brave and gallant, but weak in person and unfortunate in his undertakings, but supporting his mischances with admirable humour, and often contriving a witty and well-managed retort on his persecutors, is imagined with considerable art. The friendship of Tristan and Lancelot, and of their two mistresses, with a thousand details which display great knowledge of human nature, render Tristan interesting in the present day, in spite of those eternal combats, to which, perhaps, the work owed its original popularity. The character of King Marc is singular and specific; it is well brought out from the canvass, and a similar one is not to be met with in other romances of chivalry.

In the early metrical tales, he is merely represented as weak and uxorious. The darker shades of character have been added in the prose romance, to excuse the frailty of Yseult." I am not certain if the idea of the amorous potion, which is Yseult's great apology, and forms the ground-work of the romance, be well conceived ; for, if in one respect it palliates the conduct of the lovers, it diminishes our admiration of their fidelity. The character of the queen of Cornwall can hardly excite love or compassion, as the savage atrocity of her conduct to Brangian starts up every moment in the recollection of the reader. The pitiful malice of the white-handed Yseult, who, to serve no end, brings a false report to her husband in his last moments, renders her as contemptible as the heroine is hateful, and the dishonourable manner in which Tristan comes by his death, diminishes the pity we might otherwise feel for his fate.

Whatever may be its beauties or defects, the romance was well known, and popular in all the countries of Europe ; it was repeatedly printed in France in its original form, and modernized into the language of that country by Jean Maugin dit le petit Angevin, 1554, by whom the story has been allegorized, and Tristan exhibited as the perfection of spiritual knight-errantry.

A translation of Tristan was printed in Spanish, at Seville, 1528; and in Italian, at Venice, 1552 and 1555.

Nor has any one of the romances of the Round Table furnished such ample materials of imitation, to the Italian novelists and poets. The story of the Greyhounds, a favourite dog in the middle ages, which has been successively copied by the queen of Navarre and Bonaventure des Perriers, may be found in Tristan. There Dinas, King Marc's seneschal, pursued his wife, who had been carried off by a knight, and had taken her husband's greyhounds along with her; the seneschal overtakes the fugitives, and, trusting to the affection of his wife, agrees that she should be left to her own choice. The lady follows the knight, but the lovers instantly return and demand the greyhounds; a similar agreement is made concerning them, but they, more faithful than the lady, and deaf to the voice of a stranger, remain with their old master;—the same story is told in the *Fabliau* of the Chevalier a l'Epée; and is related of Gauvain in the metrical romance of *Perceval*, but has not been introduced into the prose one of that name. It is also in the printed *Lancelot*, but not in the most ancient MS. of that romance.

I will not say that the phrensy of Orlando has been imitated from that of Tristan; but in some circumstances it has a striking resemblance to it. Jealousy was the cause of both, and the paroxysms are similar. Ariosto, however, though perhaps through the medium of his predecessor Boiardo, is indebted to this romance for the notion of the fountains of love and hatred, which occasion such various events in the loves of Rinaldo and Angelica. Tristan also makes a conspicuous figure in the 32d canto of the Orlando, where a story of that knight is related which is borrowed from this romance. Bradamante, overtaken by night, is directed to a building which still retained the name of the tower of Tristan. In this retreat, Clodion, the son of Pharamond, had confined a beauty of whom he was jealous. Tristan had arrived there at eve, and being at first refused admission, had procured it by force of arms. After this the usage was established, that a knight should only obtain entrance if he overcame those knights who had found reception before his arrival, and the lady, if she surpassed in charms the females by whom the castle was already occupied. From the romance of Tristan, Ariosto has also borrowed the story of the enchanted horn, by which the husband discovers the infidelity of his wife, by his own way of drinking,

and which is said to have been originally given by Morgana to convince Arthur of the infidelity of Gineura :

Qual già per fare accorto il suo fratello
Del fallo di Gineura fe Morgana ;
Chi la Moglie ha pudica bee con quello,
Ma non vi può già ber chi l' ha puttana,
Che l' vin quando lo crede in bocca porre
Tutto si sparge, e fuor nel petto scorre.—(C. 43.)

In Tristan, however, the discovery is made by the *Culprit's* mode of drinking. In that romance, during one of King Marc's fits of jealousy, a knight, who was an enemy of Tristan, brings a lady to court who possesses an enchanted horn, which was so framed that those wives, who had been unfaithful to their husbands, spilled the liquor with which it was filled, in attempting to drink out of it. They all perform so awkwardly that Marc, in the first heat of his resentment, orders a bon-fire to be prepared for the general reception of the ladies of the court. This horn is also introduced in Perceval, but there the experiment is also tried on the knights. A similar trial is made on the ladies at the court of Arthur in the English *Morte Arthur*. The fiction, however, may be traced higher than the romance of Tristan. Le Grand thinks that it has been imitated from the *Short Mantle* in one of the *Fabliaux*

he has published, which was too short or too long for those ladies who had been false to their husbands or lovers. This story was originally called in the Fabliaux, *Le Court Mantel*, but was translated into prose in the sixteenth century, under the name of the *Manteau mal taillé*. There is, however, a Breton lay entitled *Lai du Corn*, which bears a nearer resemblance to the story in *Tristan*. A magical horn is brought by a boy during a sumptuous feast given by Arthur, which, in a similar mode, disclosed the same secrets as that in *Tristan*. The stories of the *Mantle* and the *Horn* have been joined in an English ballad of the reign of Henry VI., published by Percy, entitled *The Boy and the Mantle*, where the cup is the test of a dishonoured husband, and the mantle of the faithless woman. Some mode of trial on this point is common in subsequent romances and poems. In *Perceforest* it is a rose; in *Amadis de Gaul* a garland of flowers, which blooms on the head of her that is faithful, and fades on the brow of the inconstant. The reader of Spenser is well acquainted with the girdle of *Florimel*. B. 4. l. 5. s. 3.

Some experiment for ascertaining the fidelity of women in defect of evidence, seems, in reality, to have been resorted to from the earliest ages. By the Levitical law (Numbers, c. v. 11—31) there

was prescribed a mode of trial, which consisted in the suspected person drinking water in the tabernacle. The mythological fable of the trial by the Stygian fountain, which disgraced the guilty by the waters rising so as to cover the laurel wreath of the unchaste female who dared the examination, probably had its origin in some of the early institutions of Greece or Egypt. Hence the notion was adopted in the Greek romances, the heroines of which, we have seen, were invariably subjected to a magical test of this nature, which is one of the few particulars in which any similarity of incident can be traced between the Greek novels and the romances of chivalry: the Grecian heroines, however, underwent the experiment in a cave, or some retirement, though they might have exhibited with credit openly, while the ladies of chivalry are always exposed in public—in a full court or crowded assembly; the former, too, are only subjected to a trial of virginity, the latter more frequently to some proof of conjugal fidelity.

We have been long detained with Tristan and Yseult; it is now time that we proceed to the romance of

ISAIE LE TRISTE,¹

in which is related the history of their son, who was the fruit of the interviews procured for these lovers by the accommodating Dinas.

When Tristan departed for the court of Arthur, the queen was obliged to ask permission to make a distant pilgrimage. The necessity of this request conveys a most cruel, and, if we believe other romances, a most unfounded insinuation against King Marc. Yseult had proceeded no farther in her journey than the skirts of the forest of Merai, when she was forced to seek refuge with a hermit. This recluse was an experienced accoucheur; but, spite of the urgency of the occasion, he refused to communicate to Yseult the benefits of his science, till she had revealed her foibles, and thus paid the tribute which in those days conscience owed to religion.

The son to whom Yseult at length gave birth is called Isaie le Triste,—an appellation compounded of the names of his parents. The queen returns

¹ Le Roman du vaillant Chevalier Ysaie le Triste, fils de Tristan de Leonnoys Chevalier de la Table Ronde, et de la princesse Yseult Roïne de Cornouaille; avec les nobles prouesses de l' Exille fils du dit Ysaie, reduit du vieil langage François.

to her husband, and the little Isaie is left with the hermit. The child's nurse was a she bear, whose young had served to regale Queen Yseult. The milk of this animal gives to her nursing much strength and courage, but also imparts considerable moroseness.

One day, in the absence of the hermit, when Isaie was about three years of age, four fairies, who resided in the neighbourhood, come to the hermitage, and being delighted with the beauty of the child, change his simple habit for a rich vestment. At his return the hermit suspects that the fairies had visited his retreat, and in consequence feels some inquietude, for the fairies were not Christians; but the benevolence with which they had treated the child, and even the bear, for whose behoof they had left a provision of honey, induced him to consider them as such. Some days after, they returned and introduced themselves; the one as the vigorous fairy, the other as the courageous fairy, &c., and endue Isaie with the gifts which each had the power of bestowing; one giving him strength, another courage. The hermit is quite melted with gratitude for the favours heaped on his ward, but as no farther benefits were conferred on the bear, he entreated these benefactors not again to honour his solitude with their presence. The fairies on

departing leave with Isaie, as an attendant, an ill-favoured dwarf called Tronc, whose personal deformity was compensated by the quickness of his understanding.

Isaie having passed the period of infancy, his first steps in the career of glory are marked by a prodigy. One day, while walking in the green forest, accompanied by the hermit and dwarf, chance conducts them to the tomb of the celebrated enchanter Merlin, whence deep groans are heard to issue. The hermit interrogates the shade of the magician, which informs them of the overthrow of Arthur and his chivalry, and directs his audience to proceed to the hermitage of Lancelot du Lac, who alone had survived the fatal battle with Mordrec, and was now the only person worthy to invest Isaie with the order of knighthood, and to bestow a new Tristan on the world. In obedience to the exhortations of the phantom, they proceed to the retreat of Lancelot, but find on their arrival that it is no longer inhabited, as the knight had found in repose the death that avoided him in battle. By the advice of the dwarf they repair to the tomb of Lancelot; a mausoleum of a noble simplicity rises in view; Isaie invokes the shade of the departed hero, and low murmurs are heard in response from the tomb. By the recommenda-

tion of Tronc, Isaie raises the marble ; the inclosed skeleton becomes animated, the hermit arms it with a sword, and Isaie receives from its hand the honour of knighthood.

After this ghastly inauguration, while our travellers wander through the desert by which the mausoleum is surrounded, a brilliant assembly approaches, at the head of which appear the four protecting fairies, who present Isaie with the arms and armour which become a knight. The hermit, after giving some wholesome advice, returns to his retreat, leaving Isaie to pursue his route with the dwarf.

Isaie, in roaming through Britain, punishes robbers, kills giants, and makes a vast number of converts to the true faith, which seems to have been his principal object.

The fame of Isaie thus reaches the court of King Irion. It is not said where this prince reigned, but he had a beautiful niece called Martha. This lady had a strong prepossession in favour of knights, as her nurse had persuaded her that the bravest heroes were the most tender lovers. She resolves to be beloved by Isaie, and immediately writes to him on the subject. Isaie in consequence proceeds to the palace of the king, where, being asked what he wants by an officer of the guard, he

replies by breaking his head against the pillar of the gate ; on going up stairs he discovers Martha, by whom he is received as he had reason to expect. Their interview is interrupted by the arrival of the king ; but Tronc finds means to inform Martha that his master will go no farther than the first house in the suburbs. In consequence of this intimation she betakes herself in the evening to the rendezvous, where she gives her lover the most decisive proofs of her benevolence.

Isaie is obliged to leave the princess next morning, and on the road converses with Tronc on his late happiness ; who, it would appear, had little cause to congratulate himself on the amorous success of his master. *Jà en suis Je (says he) moulu et déchiré. Les Feés, vos amies et protectrices, m'ont fait chierement payer vos plaisirs ; ores dansiez vous aux nopces, et payois Je les violons ; et disoient elles que en ma chair devois Je ressentir le tort que avoit la votre.*

Isaie prosecutes his adventures ; on one occasion he fights alone against forty knights, and dispatches seven of their number. He next learns that Cravintor of the *Outrageous Passage* is going to espouse the lady of Bellegarde against her inclination. He overthrows this outrageous suitor in single combat, and leads him chained to her whom

he had anticipated as a bride. Isaie is invited to pass the night at the castle of Bellegarde. During supper he evidently discovers that he considers the lady as charming : but the watchful Tronc pulls him by the sleeve, and exclaims, " Oh, oh, oh, sire men maistre, gardez de me faire encore etriller par les fées."

Meanwhile the princess Martha had felt the consequences of a frank letter and an imprudent rendezvous. King Irion pardons her transgression, but is astonished that Isaie, having passed only twenty-four hours in his territories, should have employed them in knocking down his guard and seducing his niece.

The son of Isaie displayed in his childhood a wonderful strength and courage, but was by no means docile to instruction, and was led away by passion. His tutor complains to the king, who was much entertained by his sallies, que l' enfant mordre ne veut aux documens de chose divine, et que c'est la plus cruelle piece de chair qui oncques issit de mere. The good king, says the romance, s'en rit en sa barbe.

About this time Martha, though somewhat late, conceives the intention of uniting herself in marriage to Isaie. With this view she sets out in quest of him, disguised as a minstrel, and wanders from

tower to tower, singing lays expressive of her pain and her passion. One of these she poured forth at the gate of the castle of Argus, where Isaie happened at that time to reside. Unfortunately she is recognised by Tronc, who, still mindful of the chastisement of the fairies, informs her (after having disguised himself) that Isaie is gone to the next town, and that she will easily overtake him.

While Martha thus wastes her steps and her music, her son, having grown up, sets out also in quest of his father, in order to be knighted by him. On his way he sacks a number of castles and kills many giants. At length he learns that an army of 50,000 Saracens, who had been embarked in a fleet commanded by the Admiral of Persia, had just landed in Britain. One half had advanced into the interior, while the other had been left to guard the ships. The latter division, with the assistance of a few peasants, he totally defeats, and takes possession of the vessels; in that of the admiral, who had perished in the engagement, he discovers the beautiful Orimonda plunged in distress for the death of her father. He conducts this lady to his tent, sups with her, baptizes her, and promises to espouse her on his return to the court of King Irion; but meanwhile prevails on her to invert the usual ceremonies which constitute a legal marriage.

Next morning the son of Isaie sets out in pursuit of the remaining Saracen army, but his father had been beforehand with him. Isaie had proceeded with great rapidity in the work of conversion ; but as he had nearly extirpated the native infidels, he was much delighted with this fresh supply. With little assistance he defeats the army under the walls of the capital of King Irion. Martha is found in the tent of the Saracen general ; in the course of her wandering she had been taken prisoner by a party of the enemy, who had conducted her to their commander. A moment of still greater transport succeeds the meeting of Martha and Isaie, as their son now arrives, leading with him the beautiful Orimonda.

The posterity of Tristan are thus happy and united. The nuptials of the father and son are celebrated, and the son is knighted by the father. During the festival that ensued the protecting fairies again appear. To the faithful Tronc a recompence was still wanting. They inform him that he has the good fortune to belong to their family, and that he is the son of their eldest sister, the fairy Glorianda. Strange events, which are written in the chronicles of the fairies, had forced him to endure a long and severe penance. His aunts, the fairies, in order to enable him to pass the time more

agreeably, had transformed him into a hideous dwarf, and linked him to the fate of their *protégé*. The period of disgrace was now expired. The fairies cleansed him from his deformities, and he now appeared the handsomest prince in the world, as he had formerly been the most witty and ingenious. The smallness of his stature was the only defect that remained. His aunts bestowed on him a kingdom, and called him Aubert ; but as he was of a diminutive size, he was better known by the title of Auberon. Under this denomination he performed many wonders, which are related in the beautiful romance of Huon of Bourdeaux.

Isaie le Triste is one of the first romances of chivalry in which the fairies act a decided part. The introduction of beings of the species here described, is one of the causes which induce me to place the composition of this romance in the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century, which is two centuries and a half later than the date of Tristan. In that work, in Lancelot du Lac, and other early romances of the Round Table, there are, no doubt, fairies, but they are of a different species from the protectresses of Isaie. They are merely women, as Morgain, Vivian, &c., instructed in magic. They, indeed, have all hell at their command, can perform the greatest miracles,

and occasion to any one the severest misfortunes ; but all this is performed by intermediate agency, and they are only formidable by the intervention of demons, with whom they had formed advantageous connections : but the second class of fairies, as those in the romance of Ysaie, were self-supported beings,—they were a species of nymph or divinity, and possessed a power inherent in themselves. Nor were these creatures merely the offspring of the imagination of the romancers, but were believed to exist in the age in which they wrote. At a period much later than the composition of *Isaie*, the first question asked at the *Maid of Orleans*, in the process carried on against her, was, if she had any familiarity with those who went to the *Sabat* of the fairies, or if she had ever attended the assemblies of the fairies held at the fountain near *Domperein*, round which the evil spirits dance ; and the *Journal of Paris*, in the reigns of *Charles VI.* and *VII.*, states that she acknowledged, that, spite of her father and mother, she had frequented the beautiful fountain of the fairies in *Lorraine*, which she named the good fountain of the fairies of our Lord.

There are other circumstances besides the introduction of fairies, which may lead us to assign a late period to the composition of *Isaie*. The

French is less difficult to understand, but is also less energetic than the language of Lancelot or Tristan. "The romance of Tristan," say the authors of the *Bibliothèque*, "is as much superior to that of Isaie in characters, sentiments, and incidents, as in language; yet the history of Isaie offers many interesting situations, and presents many *coups de theatre*: but what renders it chiefly valuable, is, that it makes us acquainted with the difference of manners which existed in the beginning of the twelfth and end of the fourteenth century. The world, which is so readily accused of growing worse, had, no doubt, wonderfully degenerated, in point of chivalry at least, during these three centuries. Ignorance, too, was at its height, and delicacy of sentiment had vanished. The knights still fought with courage; and hence the writers of romance still described the most terrible combats. Principles of honour yet existed in the heart of the chevalier, but they were concealed under a rude exterior. Devotion was fervent and sincere, but it was ill understood, and worse directed. All this will be remarked in the history of Isaie."

This romance is, also, the scarcest of the class to which it belongs, which is a strong evidence of its fancied inferiority. As far as I know it never appeared in a metrical form. There is no MS. of it

extant; and there has been but one edition, which is in small folio, of which the copies are extremely rare.

The romance of

ARTHUR¹

contains little more than the events of which we have already given an account in the preceding fabulous stories of the knights of the Round Table. The incidents, however, are better arranged, and presented in one view. The work comprehends the history of the Round Table, of which Arthur was the founder, or at least the retorer, and gives an account of that monarch from his birth to the period of his tragical death.

After a narrative of the events connected with his birth and succession to the kingdom, which have been formerly related in the book of Merlin, the romance informs us that he drove the Saxons out of his dominions, by which means he secured the public peace; but he still continued to receive much disquiet from his own family. His four ne-

¹ Le Roman du Roi Artus, et des compagnons de la Table Ronde, &c.

phews, especially Gauvain, on pretence of the illegitimacy of their uncle, refused to acknowledge him as king. He defeated them in the field by his own skill and the sagacity of Merlin, and afterwards so far conciliated their favour by his bravery and good conduct, that they became the most faithful of his vassals.

Arthur then set out with his knights to the assistance of Laodogant, King of Carmelide in Scotland. This prince had been attacked by King Ryon, a man of a disposition so malevolent that he had formed to himself a project of possessing a mantle furred with the beards of those kings he should conquer. He had calculated with the grand-master of his wardrobe that a full royal cloak would require forty beards: he had already vanquished five kings, and reckoned on a sixth beard from the chin of Laodogant. Arthur and his knights totally deranged this calculation by defeating King Ryon. Laodogant, in return for the assistance he had received, offered his daughter, the celebrated Geneura, in marriage to Arthur. Merlin, however, who does not appear to have been a flattering courtier, and who does not seem to have attached to the conservation of Laodogant's beard the importance that it merited, declared that his master must first deserve the princess. In obedience to

his oracle the enchanter, Arthur, in order to qualify himself for the nuptials, made an expedition to Britany, where he defeated Claudas, King of Berri, who had unprovokedly attacked a vassal of the British monarch.

After this exploit, Arthur returned to the court of Laodogant, where preparations were now made for his union with Geneura. This princess is described as the finest woman in the universe—her stature was noble and elegant—her complexion fair, her mouth rosy and smiling—her eyes were the finest blue of the heavens—the expression of her countenance was lively yet dignified, but sometimes tender—her understanding, naturally just, was well cultivated—her heart was feeling, compassionate, and capable of the most exalted sentiments.

On the second day of the tournaments (for without these no great festival was exhibited), an unknown knight, of a ferocious aspect, came to defy the combatants. He entered the lists, but was speedily unhorsed by Arthur, and afterwards slain by him in a mortal combat (*combat a outrance*.) This knight was, after his death, discovered to be King Ryon, by the mantle which he carried under his cuirass, half furnished with the spoils of vanquished monarchs.

Arthur, after his return to England with his bride, re-established the Round Table, which was transported from Scotland, for King Laodogant had it in deposit since the death of Uter, the father of Arthur. Merlin dictated the laws and regulations of this renowned association. The kings of Scotland and Norway, the princes of Armorica and Gaul, disdained not to pay a species of tribute to the English monarch, in order to be admitted into this celebrated society. The glory of the institution was completed by Pharamond, the king of the Franks, and conqueror of Gaul, arriving incognito in Britain to obtain, by his prowess and exploits, a seat at this renowned board.

The knights of the Round Table had no exterior and characteristic mark of their order, but each had a peculiar device and motto of his own. Thus Arthur carried for his arms thirteen golden crowns, with the motto *Moult de couronnes plus de vertus*.

Lancelot du Lac had six bends of or and azure—*Haut en naissance en vaillance en amour*.

His brother Hector of Mares a golden star.—*Pour etre heureux un bel astre suffit*.

King Pharamond bore the *Fleurs de Lis*.—*Que de beaux fruits de ces fleurs doivent naître*.

After the institution of the Round Table, Ar-

that conceived the design of obtaining possession of the Sangreal ; but this precious relic, according to the oracles, could only be acquired by a knight who had a very rare qualification, and Perceval, it seems, was the only one whose purity of morals fitted him for this enterprise.

The story of the false Geneura, the credulity of Arthur, and the final triumph of the queen, which has been mentioned in the account of Lancelot, is fully related in the romance of Arthur.

After Geneura was reinstated in the affections of her husband, the glory and domestic felicity of Arthur seem to have been at their height, but the period of the destruction of the first chivalry in the world was now fast approaching. Mordret, the son of Arthur, by the Queen of Orkney, disputed the right of succession with the nephews of that monarch. Arthur sustained the claims of his nephew Gauvain against this unworthy and illegitimate son, and Mordret assembled under his banners all those who had applied for and had been refused admittance to the Round Table. Some of the knights of Arthur were still engaged with Perceval in the conquest of the Sangreal ; the rest defended themselves with unexampled valour, but Arthur and his chivalry were finally overthrown.

The Saracens, who supported Mordret, reached the division commanded by the king. Arthur was overpowered by numbers and mortally wounded; his faithful squire, Goiffed, who saw him expire, carried off his famous sword Escalibor, and threw it into a lake. Lancelot, who, in the romance of his own name, does not arrive in England till after this battle, had meanwhile attacked the battalion which Mordret commanded, put it to flight, and pursued its leader to the sea-shore. There he overtook him, and plunged his sword into his bosom. Lancelot having routed his whole host returned exulting to the tents of Arthur, where he learned the fate of his sovereign. After these events the beautiful Geneura retired to a convent, and Lancelot closed his life in a hermitage.

It is strange that in all romances Arthur and his knights should be represented as falling in battle, as well as Charlemagne and his peerage, at a time when success in war was thought necessary to complete the character of a hero.

The authors of the *Bibliothèque* inform us, with most absurd credulity, that the romance, of which we have just given an account, was written by one of the *Sire Clerks*, or annalists of the knights of the Round Table; they even fix on the name of the author of Artus, and assert that it

was Arroddian de Cologne, who, they say, retired with Lancelot du Lac into his hermitage, after the defeat of Arthur. They argue that it is impossible to assign to the romance an earlier origin, as it gives an account of the catastrophe of almost all the knights of the Round Table. *Selon toute apparence, ces chroniqueurs sont les sires clerks, ou officiers historiens et annalistes de cette premiere chevalerie du monde. Nous savons meme leurs noms, et l'on peut conjecturer, que c'est ici l'ouvrage du premier d'entre eux, nommé Arroddian de Cologne. On croit qu'il se retira avec Lancelot du Lac, dans un meme Hermitage, après la terrible défaite ou perirent le roi Artus, et la plus grande partie de ses chevaliers. La preuve que cette chronique ne fut terminée qu'après cette catastrophe, c'est qu'on y voit la fin de presque tous ces heros.*

In the body of the romance itself, it is said to be written by the equivocal Gualtier Map; it was printed at Paris, 1488, folio, by Jehan de Pré.

I have now given an account of the romances of the fabulous history of Britain, as far as Arthur and his knights are concerned, which form by far the largest proportion of the number.

There are two romances connected with the imaginary history of Britain preceding the time

of Arthur; and two which relate the fabulous incidents posterior to his reign.

Those which are the first in a historical point of view, happen to be also the earliest, considered as to the dates of their composition. One of these relates the adventures of

GYRON LE COURTOIS,²

a knight supposed to have been contemporary with Uter, the father of Arthur. This romance chiefly turns on the disinterested friendship of Gyron for Danayn the Red, and the ungrateful return he receives. At the beginning of the work several incidents are told concerning Gyron, which are calculated to prepossess the reader in his favour. In the course of his adventures he becomes the companion in arms of Danayn the Red, lord of the castle of Maloanc, whose wife, the lady of Malo-

² Le Roman de Gyron le Courtois ; traduit de Branor le Brun, le vieil Chevalier qui avoit plus de cent ans d'âge, lequel vint à la cour du roi Artus, accompagné d'une demoiselle pour s'éprouver à l'encontre des Jeunes Chevaliers, &c. Et traite ledit des plus grandes Aventures que jadis advinrent aux Chevaliers Errans ; avec la devise et les armes de tous les Chevaliers de la Table Ronde.

anc, was the most beautiful woman in Britain. The lady was enamoured of Gyron, and saw that she was by no means indifferent to the knight. Various inducements, however, proved ineffectual to persuade him to betray his friend, and she at length expired from chagrin and disappointment, at the failure of an extraordinary effort.

Gyron received intelligence of the death of the lady of Maloanc, while residing at a castle belonging to the uncle of a damsel called Bloye, whom he had formerly rescued when she was on the point of being carried off by the Knight without Fear. This lady entertained towards Gyron even a warmer sentiment than gratitude; and her care contributed to the cure of severe wounds he had received in the course of his adventures, and also to soften his grief for the death of the lady of Maloanc.

When Gyron was at length restored to health and tranquillity, the beauty and tenderness of Bloye inspired him with a new passion; he professed his love, and she accepted him as her knight.

Danayn, to dispel his grief for the loss of his wife, of whose aberrations he had remained ignorant, quitted his own castle—wandered all over the world, and at last arrived at the castle where Gyron resided with Bloye in the utmost felicity.

Gyron, in his conversations with his friend, dwelt

on the happiness he enjoyed in the society of Bloye. At one of these discourses Danayn betrayed much uneasiness, but refused to explain the cause, saying, that Gyron would know more on the morrow.

Next morning Bloye was not to be found in her chamber, but there lay on the table a letter from Danayn, in which he apologized to Gyron for running off with his lady. The feelings of Gyron are well described in the romance; he set out in quest of the traitor, and during a year's wandering experienced many perilous and romantic adventures, totally foreign to the object of his search.

One day, says the romance, when the season was fair and clear, as it might be in the end of October, it happened that the road which Gyron held conducted to the foot of a hill. The hill was white with snow, for it was winter, but the plain was green as if it had been the month of May. At the foot of the hill, in the midst of the plain, and beneath a tree, gurgled a fountain, most beautiful and most delightful, and beneath that tree sat a knight armed with hauberk and greaves, his other arms were near him, and his horse was tied to the tree; by the knight sat a lady so beautiful, that she was a miracle to behold, and if any one were to ask who was the knight, I would say it was Da-

nayn the Red, the brave knight ; as the lady seated before him was no other than the beautiful Lady Bloye, who had been so much beloved by Gyron.¹

A desperate combat ensued between the knights ; Danayn was vanquished ; Gyron spared his life, but refused to be reconciled to him, and departed with Bloye, of whom he was more enamoured than ever.

Some years afterwards Bloye engaged in an adventure with her husband, which had a very unfortunate issue, as they were both imprisoned, and it was not till after a long period that Gyron was freed by the valour of Danayn, who thus made some reparation for the injuries he had formerly inflicted on his friend. The work terminates with a detail of the exploits of Gyron's descendants.

The title of the romance of Gyron bears, that it is translated from the Chronicle of Branor le Brun. This imaginary person informs us, that one day he discovered in a subterraneous cavern, or tomb, two old knights who had voluntarily buried themselves in this place, and were long since believed in the world to be dead : one of them was called Brehus, and the other Gyron the Old. In this gloomy abode they amused themselves with recounting the

¹ See Appendix, No. XII.

history of their former wars. Old Gyron had quitted his inheritance of the throne of Gaul for the life of a knight-errant, which he had in turn abandoned for the quiet he was then enjoying ; among other things he boasts of the exploits of his grandson, Gyron the Courteous, from whom, during his infancy, the crown of Gaul had been usurped by Pharamond. Branor continues to acquaint the reader, that what he heard in the cavern, inspired him with the warmest interest for the younger Gyron. In order to gratify his curiosity concerning his exploits, he repaired to the court of King Uter. Gyron's adventures were there related to him, and he even became acquainted with the hero, whom he found equally distinguished by the majesty of his form, the vigour of his arm, the magnanimity of his soul, and the tenderness of his heart ;—he was also witness to some of his most glorious actions, and was thus enabled to record them with fidelity.

The romance is thus introduced with an art infinitely superior to the useless and perplexing mendacity of the prologues to other works of this kind. The representation of the narrator, as having been an eye witness of the adventures, gives an idea of historical accuracy. The description of the two old knights, though unnatural, is extremely pic-

turcque. A great part of the romance is uncommonly interesting, and the language is, perhaps, the finest of all the old fabulous histories of Britain. It ought, however, to have concluded with the overthrow of Danayn, and the recovery of Bloye. The adventures of her sons, which form a considerable part of the romance, are miserably tagged to the main subject. It is, indeed, a common blemish in romances of chivalry, that there is no repose in them, and that the reader is led on from generation to generation after the principal interest is exhausted. We are even informed by the editor of the printed Gyron, that the translator had not completed his version of the original work; this prior composition, I presume, was a metrical tale: but it is intended that the reader should believe it to have been a Latin chronicle.

Gyron was first printed by Verard, Paris, 1494, in folio, and afterwards in 1519, and is certainly one of the oldest romances of the class to which it belongs. Mr Ritson says it was feigned to have been translated by Rusticien de Pisc, whom he believes to be an imaginary personage. Warton thinks it was translated from the Latin at the command of Henry II. or III., by Luces Chevalier du Chateau du Gast, Gat, or Gal, which he conjectures to be an abbreviation of Salisbury.

This romance has been translated into different languages of Europe, and is the subject of an Italian poem of the 16th century, in 24 cantos, in ottava rima, written by Alamanni, and entitled *Girone Cortese*; which never obtained much popularity, owing to an injudicious imitation of the ancient epic poems in a romantic subject. The part which relates to the adventures of Gyron with the lady of Maloan, has been beautifully versified by Wieland, the German poet.

The second romance concerning events preceding the reign of Arthur, to which I alluded, and which exhibits a different set of heroes from the tales of the Round Table, is

PERCEFOREST,*

which comprehends the fabulous history of Britain, previous to the age of Arthur. It is the long-

* *La tres elegante, delicieuse, melliflue, et tres plaisante hystoire du tres noble, victorieux, et excellentissime Roy Perceforest Roy de la Grant Bretaigne, fundateur du Franc Palais et du Temple du Souverain Dieu; avec les merveil- leuses entreprinses, faits, et adventures du tres belliqueulx Gaddiffer Roy d' Escosse, lesquelz l'Empereur Alexandre le Grant couronna Roys soubz son obeissance; en laquelle*

est and best known romance of the class to which it belongs, and is the work which St Palaye, and similar writers, have chiefly selected for illustrations and proofs of the manners of the times, and the institutions of chivalry.

It is strange that Perceforest, which sets all chronology, geography, and probability at defiance, more boldly than almost any other romance, should begin with a profound, and by no means absurd, investigation concerning the topography of Britain, and the earliest ages of its history. Julius Cæsar, Pliny, Bede, and Solinus, are cited with the utmost ostentation of learning.

The author, however, soon enters on the regions of fiction. The part of his work which immediately succeeds this disquisition, corresponds pretty closely with the fabulous history of Geoffrey of Monmouth; he relates that Brutus, or Brut, the son of Sylvius, and great grandson of Æneas, having killed his father by mischance, fled to the states of a Greek king, called Pandrasus, whose daughter Imogene he espoused. From this king-

hystore le lecteur pourra veoir la source et decoration de toute Chevalerie, culture de vraye noblesse, prouesses et conquestes infinies accomplies des le temps de Julius Cesar ; avecques plusieurs propheties, comptes d'amans et leurs diverses fortunes.

dom he fitted out an expedition, and landed in Albion, since called Britain from his name, and conquered the whole country with the assistance of Corinæus, another Trojan chief he had picked up on his voyage. Most of the European nations were anciently fond of tracing their descent from Troy. The greater part of them had been at one time provincial to the Romans; and the Britons, who remained so long under their dominion, may have imbibed a general notion of the Trojan story from their conquerors. As Rome, from becoming the capital of the supreme pontiff, was a city highly revered and distinguished, and, as the Trojans were believed to be its founders, an emulation gradually arose among the nations of Europe, of claiming descent from the same respectable origin. Nor were the monks and other ecclesiastics (the only writers and readers of the age), uninterested in broaching and maintaining such an opinion. But, as to the story of Brutus, who is represented as the founder of the kingdom of Britain, in Geofrey and Perceforest, and is the hero of the most ancient, as well as the most celebrated of all the metrical romances, it may be presumed that it was not invented till after the ninth century, as Ne-nius, who lived towards the close of it, mentions

him with great obscurity, and seems totally unacquainted with the British affairs which preceded Caesar's invasion.

After the death of Brutus, the author of *Perceforest* drags his reader through the history of his numerous descendants. One of these monarchs is King Leyr, whose story in the romance is precisely the same as in the drama of Shakspeare; but the instructive tale had formerly been told by Geoffrey, and had been related in a still earlier period of a Roman emperor in the *Gesta Romanorum*. The history of Ferrex and Porrex, two of the princes of this race, mentioned in *Perceforest*, is the subject of the first regular English tragedy. It was partly written by Lord Buckhurst, or Sackville, was acted in 1561, and afterwards printed in 1565, under the name of *Gorboduc*.

At length, after a long succession of kings of the family of Brutus, his race fortunately became extinct on the demise of King Pyr: during this interregnum, the goddess Venus recommended to the inhabitants to wait on the sea-shore, where they would find a king properly qualified to govern them.

About this period, Alexander the Great was employed in the conquest of Asia. Parmenio, his lieutenant, slew Gaddiffer, governor of Galde (a

city between India and Babylon), who had imprudently attacked the Greek army, on account of some depredations they had committed. Alexander, who was a generous prince, took the children of Gaddiffer under his protection, and in a great battle defeated Claurus, who had seized on their territory. Claurus was killed in the engagement, and his son Porus taken prisoner. Alexander, however, restored to the latter his father's kingdom, on condition that he should marry Ferenas, a lady with whom he knew that Porus was enamoured. Wives are also provided by this bounteous monarch, for Betis, afterwards called Perceforest, and his brother Gaddiffer, the two sons of old Gaddiffer, governor of Galde.

The nuptials of Porus were celebrated in the city of Glodofard. About a league from this town, there was an island of the sea called Ciceron, where Venus was worshipped. To this isle Alexander set out on a pilgrimage with all his *knights*, but scarcely had they sailed when a frightful tempest arose, which drove their fleet on the coast of Britain; and a frightful tempest it must have been, which carried a fleet from the East Indies to the shores of England.

Alexander landed with his barons, at the moment the inhabitants were waiting by the sea-side

to receive a king, in obedience to the oracle of Venus, and being accordingly entreated to give them a monarch, he crowned Betis king of England, and Gaddiffer of Scotland. The Macedonian hero solemnized the coronation by the institution of tournaments, of which the intention was to renovate the ancient valour of Britons, who, even in that early age, were suspected of degenerating from their forefathers. These spectacles, which are attended by all the ladies and knights of the surrounding country, are described at full length.

After the tournaments were concluded, King Betis conceived the project of constructing a palace from the wood of the forest of Glar, which enchanters defended by the most formidable incantations. Betis accordingly set out on this expedition, and proceeded a considerable way in the forest without meeting with any adventures. At length he came to a fountain, where stood an image with an ivory horn, which the statue sounded on his approach. On this warning, the magician Darnant, the inhabitant and guardian of the grove, issued forth in knightly armour. A combat ensued, and Darnant being defeated, fled away. Betis, in the pursuit, met with enchanted rivers and other obstacles, raised by the power of

magic. He at last overtook Darnant at the gate of a delightful castle, but, when about to slay him, the enchanter changed himself to the resemblance of the beautiful Idorus, the wife of Betis. The king embraced her with transport, but received a wound in return, on which he instantly cut off the head of the magician.¹ The enchantments were now at an end, and Betis, on account of this exploit, acquired the name of Perceforest. But the wood was ever after known by the name of the forest of Darnant. We are told in the romance of *Lancelot du Lac*, that Merlin was confined by his mistress in the forest of Darnant, "*qui marchoit a la mer de Cornouailles et a la mer de Sorelloys.*" The idea of this forest may have arisen from that of *Marseilles*, in the *Pharsalia*, which is hewn down by *Cæsar*, and may in its turn have suggested the enchanted wood to *Tasso*. Like *Rinaldo*, Betis surmounts the obstacles presented by necromancy to his design. As the resolution of the Italian hero is for a moment shaken by a demon from the tree, assuming the appearance of the beautiful *Armida*; so the king of England is about to save the chief enchanter, who had clothed himself with the form of the fair *Idorus*.

¹ See Appendix, No. XIII.

The labours of Perceforest were not completed by the death of Darnant, as he had many combats to sustain with the son and brothers of that enchanter. Alexander, surprised at his delay in returning from the forest, set out in quest of him : on his way he encountered the family of Darnant, and carried on a long intrigue with Sibille, the Lady of the Lake in those days, from which amour sprung the ancestor of the renowned Arthur.

After the termination of a long war against the posterity of Darnant, of which the siege of Malebranche is the leading feature, tournaments were exhibited by the knights of a new order of chivalry instituted by Alexander and Perceforest. These were attended by the hermit Pergamon, who had been a companion of Brut, and seems to have lived through the intervening centuries for no end but to be present at these spectacles. The tournaments concluded with the departure for Babylon of Alexander, whom we have hitherto seen acting so conspicuous a part in this romance. The Macedonian monarch was introduced into many other tales of chivalry, and was indebted for his romantic decoration to a fabulous account of his conquests, which was compiled from eastern fictions by Simeon Seth, but passed under the name

of Callisthenes, and was translated into almost all the languages of Europe during the middle ages.

About the time that Alexander returned to Asia, Gaddiffer, the brother of Perceforest, went to take possession of his kingdom of Scotland, of which country there is more said in this work than in any other romance of chivalry. After Gaddiffer arrived in Scotland, he proceeded on an excursion through his dominions, for the sake of dispensing justice and reforming the savage manners of his subjects; and they entered, says the romance, (that is, the king and his courtiers), on the deserts of Scotland, and travelled two days without seeing town, castle, or human being. At length they came to a delightful meadow, through which a fine river flowed. The king regretted that this district was so thinly peopled, but at length perceived some tame cows, and children of ten or twelve years of age running amongst them. The knight Estonne seized one of these tender savages, who, like her companions, was clothed with a sheep skin, but proved to be a girl of twelve years of age. She was extremely handsome, but much more remarkable for that quality than her politeness; for, on looking down, the knight perceived that his fair prisoner was gratifying either her hunger or resentment, by demolishing the neck of his

horse. She also spoke such bad Greek, that it was impossible to comprehend her verbal communications, though accompanied by gestures unusually energetic.

After Gaddiffer had done all in his power to amend the unpolished fashions of his infant kingdom, the incidents related bear a very remote relation to his history, or to that of his brother Percforest, the titular hero of the romance. Every thing like unity of action is laid aside, and the rest of the work is occupied with the insulated adventures of individual knights. A great proportion of these is attributed to Estonne, lord of the Scotch deserts. This great landed proprietor was in the good graces of a spirit called Zephyr, who, assuming a variety of shapes, carried his favourite wherever he desired. Estonne at length, while dozing by an enchanted fountain, was murdered by Bruyant without faith. His death was revenged by his son Passelion, whose adventures are the most entertaining in the latter part of the romance; when only two years old he became a paragon of chivalry, and not long after was carried, by a spirit, around Tartarus, in a manner which may have suggested some of the scenes in the *Commedia* of Dante.

About the middle of the romance, an account

is given of the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar. This chief had landed on a former occasion, but had been worsted in single combat by the British knight Lyonnell; his second attempt was more successful, owing to the treachery of the wife of Bethides, son of Perceforest, a lady to whom the author assigns an intrigue with Lucus, a Roman senator. All the knights of Britain were destroyed in a great battle. Their bodies are indeed still preserved in Aran, an Irish island, where the climate is such that nothing can decay; but the exploits of a new set of heroes fill up the romance. Of these the chief is Gallifer, grandson of old Gaddiffer, king of Scotland, who met with innumerable adventures in the pursuit of the lady with two dragons. He also put an end to the enchantments at the tomb of Darnant, which seems to have been the rendezvous of all the evil spirits in Great Britain. At length having delivered his country from the anarchy in which it was left by the Romans, he was crowned king of Britain, but did not long enjoy this exaltation, as he was chased from his kingdom by Scapiol, a German knight, who usurped the throne. Olofer, one of the deposed monarch's sons, became a great favourite of the new king; the other, named Gallafer, retired to a dis-

tant part of the island, at first studied astronomy, and afterwards founded a new sovereignty.

In this kingdom the royal astronomer was visited and converted by Alain, a Christian disciple, who persuaded him to change his heathenish name of Gallafer into Arfaran. He soon after resigned his crown to Josue, Alain's brother, and proceeded to preach the gospel to his ancestors, Perceforest and Gaddiffer, who, the reader will be surprised to hear, were yet in existence, and residing in the island of Life (supposed Wight). Perceforest had been severely handled in the wars with the Romans; he had received twelve mortal wounds on the head; he had left his right hand on the field of battle; the other hung by a fibre; his belly was laid open in four places, and he was lame of his left foot. In this fractional state he had passed into the island of Life, where he was joined by his brother Gaddiffer, and afterwards by the deposed Gallifer. On landing on this island, King Arfaran beheld a temple, and, looking in, perceived a group of worshippers before the altar. They were clothed in sheep's-skins; their hair, whiter than snow, descended to their heels; their beards covered their breasts, and thence extended to their knees. These antiques consisted of Dardanon, who had come to Britain soon after Brut; Gaddiffer, with his

queen; Gallifer, and the relics of Perceforest. King Arfaran having given them an abridgement of the doctrines of the Old and New Testament, they expressed a great desire of death. For this special purpose they departed from the isle of Life, and arrived on a shore where five monuments had spontaneously arisen for their accommodation. Dardanon, as the oldest, is honoured with sepulchral precedence, and the rest follow according to seniority. These monuments may have suggested to Tasso, the self-formed sepulchre which rose to receive the body of Sueno (*Gerus. Lib. c. 8*); and that which in his Rinaldo miraculously enclosed the Knight of the Tomb (*c. 7*).

In this romance the concluding incident of the tombs is indeed abundantly ludicrous, but it has been rendered impressive by description. Nothing can be better painted than the voyage from the isle of Life, and the arrival at the unknown solitary shore; the mysterious voice directing where to proceed; the midnight journey through the wood; the five monuments rising under the light of the moon; the gradual decay of the venerable band, and the voluntary resignation of their breath into the hands of their Creator.

Indeed, ludicrous incident and beautiful description form the chief characteristics of the work. I

know no romance of chivalry which abounds with more of the beauties and faults of that species of composition ; all unity of action, probability, and chronological accuracy are laid aside ; but there is an endless variety of enchantment, and a wonderful luxuriance of description.

There is a great difference among the romances concerning the early history of Great Britain, with regard to the introduction of marvellous embellishments. Thus it is impossible to conceive two works more completely different than that of *Perceforest*, and *Meliadus*, of which we have formerly given an account. The latter is almost entirely filled with descriptions of battles and tournaments, and is adorned with no supernatural ornaments. *Perceforest*, on the other hand, abounds with evil spirits, fairies, enchanters, and all those specious wonders which constitute the soul of romance. Dreams, too, and visions, which we have seen were so much used by *Heliodorus*, *Tatius*, &c., and so little in the other romances of chivalry, are common in *Perceforest*.

From the endless variety of enchantments it contains, this romance is, perhaps, the most entertaining, and has become the most popular of the class with which it has been ranged. In consequence of the information it comprehends concern-

ing the manners of the period in which it was written, especially the solemnities observed at tournaments, and the *costume* of our ancestors; it is also the most instructive, and has been chosen as a text-book by M. de Sainte Palaye, and other enquirers into the history and habits of the middle ages. It is said that *Perceforest* was one of the books which Charles IX., during his education, chiefly busied himself in reading; and that to this he was enjoined (I cannot discover with what view) by his mother Catherine de Medicis.

Mr Warton informs us that *Perceforest* was originally written in verse about the year 1220. It is difficult to say precisely at what time it was reduced to prose, but it was probably subsequent to the annexation of Dauphiny to the crown of France, as the son of the King of Galles (Wales) is called the dauphin, which, I think, also proves that the author was a Frenchman. With regard to his name I cannot give even the inconsistent information which I have collected concerning the other writers of romance. There is nothing said on this subject in the preface, which is merely an address to the French nobility, loaded with extravagant compliments, and containing a summary of the whole. The author just hints that he had borrowed it from another work. It is in the second

chapter that the fabulous story of its origin is related. Philip, Count of Hainault, attended the daughter of the King of France to England, to be present at her nuptials with Edward, which were celebrated in 1286. During the count's residence in England, he went on an excursion to the northern part of the kingdom, and arrived one day at a monastery situated on the banks of the Humber. The abbot received him with much politeness, and conducted him through the apartments of the convent. Among other places they entered an old tower, which was then repairing, where the abbot pointed out a vault in the deep walls, which had lately been discovered by the workmen. He informed his guest that in this vault there had been found an old chronicle which no one could read, till a Greek Clerc came to study philosophy in this country, who translated it from the Greek into the Latin language. The count insisted on having a loan of the Latin version ; and, on his return to his own country, took it with him to Hainault, where it was copied. We are farther told in the course of the work, that the first part of it was written by Cressus, *maitre d' hotel* to Alexander the Great. To Cressus the knights every year related their exploits on oath. He was thus enabled to make a compilation, which was preserved by Paustounet,

a minstrel, and read by his son Pousson at the coronation of King Gallafer. With this recital the court are so much delighted, that Pousson is commanded by the king to continue the adventures of the knights of his own period, and his labours accordingly formed the last part of the romance of *Perceforest*.

It has already been mentioned that there are two romances which recount events subsequent to those concerning Arthur or his knights—*Artus de la Bretagne*, and *Cleriadus*, both of which may be regarded as continuations of the fabulous history of the Round Table. The authors of these works do not fix the period in which these two descendants of the great Arthur flourished; but the romances themselves have no doubt been written at a date much posterior to *Lancelot* or *Tristan*.

ARTUS DE LA BRETAGNE,

which, I think, is the earliest of the two, is supposed to have been written during the reign of Charles the Sixth of France.—First, because the decorations given to the knights and heroines are the same with those which were in fashion while Charles swayed the sceptre; and, secondly, the

language is nearly of the same antiquity with that of Froissard, who lived in the time of that monarch. In the court of his queen, Isabella of Bavaria, splendour and gallantry reigned in spite of disorder and proscription. Festivals and tournaments were revived by her to amuse the clouded mind of her husband, or occupy his attention when gleams of reason disclosed to him the miseries of his kingdom. These exhibitions served to relume that romantic spirit of chivalry which had blazed with so much lustre in the better ages of France, and which was not unsuitable to the character of its unfortunate monarch.

The romance of Artus de la Bretagne, of which there have been three editions, was first published in 4to, in 1502, at the time when Anne of Britany united her dominions to the throne of France. This favourable opportunity for publication was probably seized with a view of complimenting that princess, as the romance relates to her fabulous ancestors, and comprehends the adventures of Arthur, son of John, Duke of Britany, who was descended from the celebrated Lancelot du Lac. A renowned knight, called Gouvernau, was appointed tutor to this young prince. One day, while engaged in the pleasures of the chace, the preceptor and his pupil are separated from the rest of their party in a forest, and arrive at a cottage, where an

elderly lady, whose husband had been once a powerful baron, resided with her daughter Jeannette. Arthur is enchanted with the beauty of the damsel, bestows on her the revenues of the spot, and often repeats his visit.*

The mother of Arthur afraid, from his frequent absence, that he is about to be betrayed into an alliance unsuitable to his birth, proposes to the duke to demand Perona, daughter of the Duchess of Austria, in marriage for their son. This young lady enjoyed a very bad reputation, and the duke for some time declines the connection, but is at last forced to consent to the wishes of his wife. The seneschal is sent as a proxy, and Perona, who had cogent reasons to accelerate her nuptials, arrives soon after with great ceremony at Nantes.

During the preparations for his marriage, Arthur continues to frequent the cottage. He finds Jeannette less troubled than he expected by the news of his approaching nuptials; she merely informs him, that she also was about to be united, that her intended husband resembled Arthur in form, and was matchless in nobility and power.

These ambiguous expressions of Jeannette, and her apparent indifference, are accounted for in the following manner:—During the preparations for

* See Appendix, No. XIV.

the marriage, Lucca, the mother of Perona, had been in some tribulation, as she was aware of the backsliding of her daughter. Ancel, one of her knights, for he too was in the secret, suggests to the Austrian family a stratagem similar to that which for some time preserved the fame of Yseult of Cornwall. He explains that there is a damsel in the neighbourhood called Jeannette, whose mother might be bribed to lend her daughter as a substitute for Perona till Arthur should fall asleep, after which the princess could occupy the place that was allotted her without hazard of detection.

In pursuit of this speculation Ancel proceeds to the cottage. He finds the mother is not disposed to engage in this sort of traffic; but Jeannette overpowers all scruples by a torrent of argument, which may have been satisfactory to herself on the score of her future intentions, but certainly possessed very little plausibility for the conviction of others.

The nuptials of Arthur and Perona are solemnized, and Jeannette performs the part she had chosen. It seems to have been the custom in Britany that the night after the marriage the husband should present his wife with a ring and an act of dowry. Jeannette does not neglect to demand the performance of this ceremony, hoping that she will

thus be entitled to assert claims to Arthur as her husband. Fortified with these credentials, she readily resigns her place to Perona when the opportunity was presented.

Arthur next morning pays a visit to Jeannette, who produces the ring; and at the same time gives him some insight into the character of Perona. This lady is also a good deal nonplust on being asked by the duke to shew him the act of dowry Gouvernau, who had been at the cottage with Arthur on his last visit, reveals the whole story on his return. Jeannette is confronted with the Austrian family, and Perona is utterly disgraced. Lucia leaves the court with her daughter, and when they came to the fields the mother began to lament, and Perona was so much grieved that she died; at which, says the romance, Arthur and his court had great joy, and Jeannette above all the rest.

Now Arthur remained with Jeannette four years in his father's court. At the end of this period he has a dream, in which Florence, his future mistress, appears to him, and his other adventures are very clearly pourtrayed by a vision of eagles and griffins. Arthur is induced by this dream to ask leave of his father to travel in quest of his mistress. This being granted, he sets out with his cousin Hector,

son of the Count of Blois, Gouvernau, and a squire.

At this time there reigned a king called Emen-dus in Sorolois, an empire little known in modern geography, but which the romance declares to be situated in the heart of Mesopotamia. This monarch had four vassal kings, who ruled over the uncouth lands of Normal, Valfondeé, &c., and a queen called Fenice, who possessed the contiguous territories of Constantinople and Denmark. On one occasion the royal pair held their court at Corinth, and gave a grand festival to their peers, at which the queen sat on the right-hand of the king. It would appear that her majesty had intended to take the liberty of bringing forth in the presence of her court, but the king of Yrcania having looked at her, declared she must instantly retire to the place where the king wished her to be confined. A discussion arose at table concerning the most suitable situation. At length it was determined that the castle of the Black Gate (Porte Noire), lying on the Perilous Mount, guarded by every species of monster, and surrounded by a river abounding in all sorts of vermin, would be the most commodious spot for the ensuing parturition. Another advantage of this situation was, that the castle belonged to a fairy called Proserpine, who, if duly propitiated, might bestow a number of fine

qualities on the infant. The name of Florence is given to the daughter to whom the queen gives birth. She is brought up with Stephen, son to the King of Valfondée, and proves, when she grows up, a perfect prodigy of beauty.

The principal object of Arthur is the quest of this incomparable princess; but he is frequently diverted from his chief design by the enticements held out to him in the destruction of monsters and giants. But the greatest number of his exploits consists in disenchanting castles, one of which is the Porte Noire, the birth-place of Florence, where an image, which held a hat it was to place on the head of the destined husband of Florence, had been in attendance from time immemorial. But the period of this inauguration was not yet arrived. Arthur had still to encounter

——— fierce faces threatening wars,
Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise.

In these exploits he is neither assisted by Hector of Blois, whom at the beginning of his career he had married to the Countess of Brueil, a lady he had freed from her enemies, nor does Gouvernau attend him in many of his expeditions, but experiences separate, though similar, adventures. He is frequently enabled, however, to track Arthur by the carcasses he finds on the roads; and he walked,

says the romance, till he saw ten robbers lying slain ; then Gouvernau said to Jaquet, My lord has been here (c. 57).

But Arthur occasionally meets with a different species of allurements from that presented in an intercourse with giants and monsters. Proserpine, the protecting fairy of Florence, in order to try his fidelity to her protégé, risks her own honour by throwing herself in his way at the foot of an oak in a forest he was traversing. Nor is this vigilant fairy satisfied with one experiment. She contrives a plot by which Arthur comes to her palace, where her own blandishments being again resisted, she employs one of her damsels, who is treated with an indifference as satisfactory to Proserpine as provoking to the damsel, who did not take the same interest as the fairy in this triumph of constancy.

Florence, in the mean time, was exposed to similar difficulties. The Emperor of India had demanded her in marriage, and had lately arrived at her father's court to prosecute his suit in person. This alliance was as acceptable to King Emendus as it was disagreeable to the party chiefly interested. Matters, however, having come to a crisis, Florence is obliged to request that the celebration of the nuptials be deferred till a splendid tournament is proclaimed, the fame of which she trusts will

lead Arthur to court; for of his approach and attachment she had been apprized by her confidant Stephen, who had met with him at Porte Noire and other places.

Arthur, according to expectation, appears at the tournament, and Florence obtains an interview with him, by the intervention of Stephen, or the Master, as he is generally called.

On the first day of the tournaments Arthur greatly distinguishes himself, and Florence, in order that her lover might not be exhausted with two days fighting, feigns sickness on the following morning, and requests that the tournament be delayed. *Aura elle ce meschef* (says Emendus on hearing of the illness of his daughter) *Je serois courroucé si elle se mouroit sans hoir de son corps* (c. 63.) This paternal monarch is conducted to the chamber of Florence by Stephen, who there commences a harangue, which may give some idea of the mode of managing sick princesses in those times. My lady, God to-day has done you great honour. Never were there so many people assembled by the sickness of a princess as there are to visit you; for here is an emperor, ten kings, thirty dukes, and the whole chivalry of the sovereign of India.

But in this chamber there was something still

more important than all this blaze of quality. In a corner of the room stood the image with the hat, which Stephen, who dabbled in magic, had lately smuggled from Porte Noire by a stroke of necromancy. The company assembled are informed that the person on whom the statue confers the hat will be acknowledged as the husband of Florence. The Emperor of India first presents himself, but the image continues motionless. To the vassal kings of Emendus it is equally unpropitious; till at length Arthur approaching receives the token that was reserved for him.

In spite of this unequivocal demonstration on the part of the image, Emendus still persists in his intention of bestowing his daughter on the Emperor of India. This resolution compels Florence to fly to the Porte Noire, accompanied by the kings and knights who were friendly to her; while the fairy Proserpine, who exactly resembled her in figure, occupies her place at court. The imposture, however, being at length detected, Florence is besieged in Porte Noire by her father and the Emperor of India with immense armies. During the siege, Proserpine is observed by the latter flying from the castle. As she had assumed the shape of Florence, he overtakes her, and extorts a promise of marriage. Then, having assured her of his pro-

tection, he conducts her to Emendus, who, on her entrance, salutes her with his foot. This commentary on her returning obedience was not relished by the emperor ; a squabble arises between the monarchs, during which Proserpine disappears, and the emperor soon after retires to his own country.

The night succeeding his departure, Stephen throws the whole army of Emendus into a profound sleep, and then, with the assistance of five knights, conveys the king, while in bed, to Porte Noire. By this trick of legerdemain he is obliged, when he awakes, to give his consent to his daughter's marriage with Arthur. Previous to their union that prince pays a visit to Britany, where he has rather an awkward interview with Jeannette. On his return to Porte Noire, he is accompanied by a number of the peers of France, the duke and duchess, and also Jeannette, whose presence was certainly superfluous. On the journey Stephen informs Arthur that he had discovered by his books that Florence had left the Porte Noire, and was now besieged in the White Tower by the Emperor of India. Arthur is advised to proceed thither with his host, but he determines on a plan of action more suited to his impatience, and to his confidence in his own prowess. He presses forward in disguise,

followed by three knights, to the White Tower, where he signalizes his arrival by cutting up a whole army, with wounds that exhibit great anatomical variety. His other friends having come up soon after, the gates of the White Tower are purposely left open, and the emperor, thinking it defenceless, enters with the remains of his army, still amounting to fifty thousand men. These are speedily dispatched; the emperor himself is taken prisoner, and soon after dies of grief.

No farther obstacle remaining to the marriage of Arthur, a splendid tournament celebrates the triple nuptials of Arthur with Florence, Gouvernau with Jeannette, and Stephen the Master with Margaret, a princess whom Arthur had reinstated in her kingdom early in the romance.

Florence, in due season, produces a son, which the accurate romancer informs us she conceived the night of the espousals. The birth of this child King Emendus solemnizes by dying of joy. Arthur is, of course, crowned King of Sorolois; he reigned, says the romance, thirty-two years, and left the care of his child, and all that he possessed, to Hector, Gouvernau, and the Master—*et d' autre chose plus rien n' en dict l' histoire, ains elle se tait.*

The chief excellence of the romance of Artus

de la Bretagne is, that it possesses more unity of design than the works of the same nature by which it was preceded. The story of Jeannette at the beginning is indeed episodical, but it is discussed in fourteen chapters, and through the remainder of the work the adventures relate to one common original, the object that appeared in the dream; and to one common end, the union of Arthur and Florence. Accordingly, the chief employment of Arthur is the search of Florence, and her deliverance from the power of the emperor; and though these objects be occasionally lost sight of by the irresistible temptations thrown out by giants or monsters, they are never entirely abandoned. But in *Tristan*, *Meliadus*, *Perceforest*, and the older romances, there is no permanent motive that inspires the action. In them the momentary gratification of passion, an occasional display of valour, and a concluding paroxysm of devotion, comprise the incidents of the romance.

Hence, too, there is no romance of the Round Table in which so great a war is carried on for the sake of a single woman, as in that we have just analyzed. We do not behold two knights occasionally tilting for the heart or favours of a lady, but the whole forces of India ranged against the chivalry of France. A single knight, in a pa-

roxysm of valour, overthrows the army of an empire; and though the combats are usually described more circumstantially than intelligibly, the slaughter is always conducted on a magnificent scale, and tends to one purpose.

But though the unity of design in this romance be commendable, the design itself is by no means deserving of applause. Nothing can be more absurd than that Arthur should be enchanted with a woman he had never beheld, desert a beloved mistress, and set out in quest of the unknown fair, in consequence of an obscure vision. There is something, too, extremely cold and hard-hearted in thus abandoning Jeannette, which gives us, at the first, a very unfavourable idea of the character of the hero. Nor, as we advance, do we find him possessed of a single quality, except strength and courage, to excite respect or interest. This remark might, perhaps, be justly extended to all the other characters in the romance, except Stephen, or the Master, as he is called. That young and royal astrologer is painted as endowed with every personal grace and accomplishment—he has endless resources in every emergency—he possesses a delightful frankness and gaiety, united to an invincible heroism; the utmost warmth of friendship to Arthur, and an unshaken fidelity to Florence. He

also constantly amuses the reader by raising up delightful gardens, fountains, and singing birds, by the operations of natural magic,—a knowledge of which was at one time believed to be a common attainment. The Jongleurs were professors of this mystery ; and Sir John Mandeville saw many proficient in the East.

It can hardly be doubted that the leading incident of the romance of Arthur of Britany suggested to Spenser the plan and outline of his Faery Queene ; where Arthur, the hero, sees in a vision, and, seeing, falls in love with the fairy queen, whose quest is the great object through the whole of that romantic poem.

CLERIADUS

is the last romance that has been ranked among those of the Round Table. It does not strictly belong to that class, but has been numbered with them, as a great proportion of the adventures take place in England, and as the hero was married to one of the descendants of the great Arthur.

Philippon, King of England, one of the successors of Arthur, being far advanced in life, sent to Spain, in order to request that the Count of Astu-

rias, a man renowned for his wisdom, would come to England to assist him in the government of his kingdom. The count arrived according to invitation, and brought with him his son Cleriadus, who soon became enamoured of Meliadice, the daughter of Philippon. To render himself worthy of her affections he engaged in many hazardous enterprises both in England and in his native country. Among other exploits he subdued a lion, which ravaged all England, but who turned out to be a gallant knight metamorphosed by the malevolence of a fairy; and on one occasion he challenged and overcame all the heroes of the court of Philippon. After this exhibition, Philippon gave a splendid entertainment in honour of Cleriadus, who contributed a *pic-nic* of sparrowhawks and dressed dogs, which seem to have been the delicacies of the time; he also danced for the amusement of the company, and sung a duet with Meliadice by order of the king.

The final happiness of the lovers seemed fast approaching, when ambassadors arrived from the court of Cyprus to beg assistance against the Saracens, who had invaded that island. Though this enterprise was somewhat out of the line of his majesty's politics, yet, in order to testify his zeal for the Christian cause, he sent eight hundred men to

Cyprus, with Cleriadus at their head, an expedition which may, perhaps, have been suggested to the imagination of the romancer by the circumstance of a king of Cyprus having resided in England during the reign of Edward the Third.

The Queen of England had a brother Thomas, Count of Langarde, a man of infamous character, who had conceived an incestuous passion for his niece. As his proposals were rejected with horror, he seized the absence of Cleriadus as a fit opportunity for revenge. He forged letters, which he made appear to have passed between Cleriadus and Meliadice, in which the lovers agreed to poison the king, and ascend the throne in his stead. The good monarch, though he seems generally to have dispensed with the trouble of reflection, at first betrayed an inclination for a trial, but at the persuasion of Langarde, Meliadice, without farther ceremony, is sent under the charge of four ruffians to be murdered in a wood. Two of their number, however, are seized with compunction, and persuade their comrades to agree in saving her. She is accordingly allowed to escape on condition of leaving the country, but is previously stripped, that she might not draw observation by the splendour of her dress. Thus she wanders through the country, in a dishabille which was fully as likely to

attract attention as her royal vestments. At many gates she was refused admittance as a person of suspicious character ; but at length found refuge in the cottage of an old woman, who gave her clothes, and sent her, with letters of introduction, to a merchant, who lived on the sea-coast, and was speedily to embark for Spain. After a prosperous voyage she was landed at Villablanca, the capital of Asturias, where she entered into service with a female cousin of the merchant's.

Meanwhile Cleriadus having conquered the Saracens, returned to England, where he was informed of the death of Meliadice. He also found that his father, having lost all influence, had retired to Asturias, and that the defamer of his mistress was acting as viceroy. He assaulted Langarde next morning, and defied him to single combat ; but that prince preferring the certainty of immediate execution to the risk of a battle, confessed his crime. Philippon, as may be imagined, was inconsolable for the loss of his daughter, but, spite of his entreaties, Cleriadus would not consent to remain in England. He assumed a pilgrim's habit, and embarked on board a vessel which was bound for the Tagus. The ship, however, fortunately encountered a storm on the coast of Gascony, which forced it to enter the port of Villablanca. Although

Cleriadus had formally renounced his country, he could not refrain from ascending a hill in the neighbourhood to take a last geographical survey of the abode of his parents.

While ruminating on his misfortunes, a young woman, whom the reader divines to be Meliadice, arrived, bearing a water-pitcher on her head. Seeing him plunged in distress, she attempted to console him, and concluded with offering charity. She persuaded him to disclose the cause of his grief; and while he was yet speaking she recognised her lover, broke her water-pitcher, and threw herself into his arms. The happy couple set off for the seat of the Count of Asturias, who, in a few days, accompanied them to England. There they were legally united with the consent of Philippon, who soon after resigned his crown to Cleriadus.

There exists one other prose romance of the knights of the Round Table, the history of Giglan, (son of Gauvain) and Geoffrey of Mayence; it was translated from the Spanish by Claude Platin, and was printed, according to De Bure, in 1530. I have never seen this romance; but to judge from extracts, it is not scarcer than it deserves to be.

Besides the metrical romances from which the prose compilations we have analyzed have been chiefly formed, there are a number of others which

existed in MS. in the library of M. de Sainte Palaye. None of them have been printed at full length, but of those which were written by the Trouveurs of the north of France an abridged version has been given in the admirable selection of Le Grand. A great proportion of the metrical romances concerning Arthur and his knights were written in the twelfth century by Chrestien de Troyes, and many of them were afterwards continued by Huon de Mery. Some of these relate new adventures concerning knights of the Round Table, and others introduce new heroes.

I. One of the most beautiful of these metrical tales is Erec and Enide, by Chrestien de Troyes. Erec vanquishes a knight who had insulted an attendant of Queen Geneura at a national hunt. After the battle, Erec discovered on the domains of the person he had conquered, his beautiful niece, called Enide, who resided near her uncle's castle, but had been allowed by him to remain in the utmost poverty. Erec marries this lady, and soon forgets all the duties of chivalry in her embraces; his vassals complain bitterly of his sloth, and Enide rouses him to exertion. Attended by her alone he sets out in quest of adventures, of which a variety are related. One day Erec swoons through fatigue, and Enide readily believes him dead. A baron,

whose castle was in the neighbourhood, passes by at the time, and Enide is married to him, while her husband is in the fainting fit. A nuptial feast is prepared in the room where Erec lay, but a squabble arising between the baron and his bride, on account of the obstinacy of the latter in refusing to eat, Erec is awakened from his syncope by the noise; and being, it would appear, much refreshed by his swoon, instantly beats out the brains of his rival, and disperses the attendants. As the provisions had by this time cooled, he immediately departs with Enide, and arrives in safety at his own castle, after experiencing a curious adventure in a subterraneous labyrinth, from which he rescued a lady who was there detained by enchantment.

2. *La Charette*, the first part of which was written by Chrestien de Troyes, and the conclusion by Geoffrey de Ligny. It relates the early adventures of Lancelot, and the commencement of his amour with Queen Geneura.

3. *The Chevalier au Lion* has been generally attributed to Chrestien de Troyes, but the Abbé de la Rue ascribes it to Wace. This romance must not be confounded with another of the same name, of which Perceval is the hero. In the present work Yvain is the principal character, and it has given rise to an old English poem, *Yvain and*

Gawain, published by Mr Ritson. A knight at the court of Arthur relates that he had been induced to try the adventure of a fountain, where a dreadful storm was raised by throwing the water on a marble stone, but that the commotion brought to the spot a valiant knight, by whom he had been defeated. Yvain resolves to try this stormy experiment, and the expected combatant appears. Yvain kills this champion, and marries his widow, who resided in a castle in the neighbourhood, and finds that a knight is necessary to defend her territories, and reply to the whirlwinds from the fountain. After remaining some time with his wife, Yvain sets out in quest of new adventures, promising to return in a year. When he had exceeded his time, a damsel on the part of his wife comes unexpectedly to the court of Arthur, and reproaches him with his infidelity. Yvain instantly goes mad, and roams through the country, committing extravagancies, which, it may be remarked, bear much closer resemblance to those of Orlando, than the transports of Lancelot or Tristan. It is after he is cured of this phrensy that he rescues the lion, whom he finds engaged in a perilous combat with a dragon. The grateful quadruped attends him ever after, and is of great service in all his adventures. Yvain at last thinks of being reconciled to

his wife, and begins his overtures towards accommodation, by raising storms from the fountain. The lady, who had resolved against agreement, is shaken by this species of eloquence; as she finds she must either be reconciled to her husband, or pass her life in an eternal hurricane.

There are a great number of the *fabliaux* relating to the knights of Arthur, of which Gauvain is generally the hero, but which also contain a great deal about Queux, the seneschal of Arthur.

4. In *le Chevalier a l'Epee*, falsely attributed by some to Chrestien de Troyes, Gauvain is received in a splendid castle, where it was the rule that every person should be put to death who found fault with any thing he saw in the habitation. Owing to a hint he received from a peasant on entering this ceremonious residence, he abstains from all criticism: but he was not aware of a second regulation, that an enchanted sword cut off the head of any one who took liberties with the daughter of the chatelain. On the second night of his stay, the father locks him up in the same chamber with his daughter; but the lady having taken a liking to him, warns him of his danger, and he escapes with a slight wound in the arm. This damsel was afterwards married to Gauvain, and of her

is related the example of female infidelity, contrasted with canine attachment, which has been given in the abstract of Tristan.

6. *La Mule sans Frein* has by some been attributed to Paysans Maisiriers, and by others to Chretien de Troyes. A disconsolate lady, mounted on a mule without a bridle, comes to the court of Arthur, and requests that one of his knights would set out in search of this bridle, declaring, that the mule knew the road to the place where it lay. Queux, the seneschal, offers his services, but speedily returns, appalled by the dangers he encounters. Gauvain then sets out, and after much procedure with giants and monsters, recovers the treasure from the lady's elder sister, who had robbed the younger of it. In the original romance there is not the smallest advantage to be derived from the possession of this bridle; but, in an abstract in the *Bibliothèque des Romans*, it is feigned to procure for the holder the comforts of eternal youth and unfading beauty, which gives a semblance of probability to the contest of these freakish sisters. The tale has been versified by Mr Way, and by the German poet Wieland.

7. The well-known story of *le Court Mantel*, printed in the 16th century, and in *Le Grand*, under the title of *Le Manteau mal Taillée*.

8. The History of the adventures of the four brothers, Agravain, Gueret, Galheret, and Gauvain, all of whom set out in different directions, in quest of Lancelot du Lac. Agravain, as a *coup d'essai*, kills Druas, a formidable giant, but is in turn vanquished by Sornehan, the brother of the deceased. His life is spared at the request of the conqueror's niece, and he is confined in a dungeon, where his preserver secretly brings him refreshments. Gueret also concludes a variety of adventures, by engaging Sornehan, and being overcome, is shut up in the same dungeon with his brother. Galheret, the third of the fraternity, comes to a castle, where he is invited to play with the lady at chess, on condition that if he wins he is to possess her person and castle, but should otherwise become her slave. The chess men are ranged in compartments on the floor of a fine hall, are large as life, and glitter with gold and diamonds. Each of them is a fairy, and moves on being touched by a talisman. Galheret loses the game, and is confined with a number of other check-mated knights. Gauvain, however, soon after arrives, and vanquishes the lady at her own arms; but only asks the freedom of the prisoners, among whom he finds his brother. Having learned from an elvish attendant of the lady, the fate of his two other

kinamen, he equips himself in the array of the chess king. In this garb he engages Sornehan, who, being dazzled with the brightness of his attire, is easily conquered, by which means Agravain and Gueret are delivered from confinement.

An account has now been presented of the romances of the Round Table, the most ancient class of chivalrous composition. Of the usual tone of incident in these romances, I trust the reader may have formed some idea from the abstracts that have been given. In many of those points that have been laid down, as constituting excellence in the materials of fictitious narrative, they will be found extremely defective. The novelty of incident is not great, as most of the events related were drawn from the metrical romances, by which the prose ones were preceded. But, if we at one view consider the originals and imitations, the incidents are of such a nature as were never before presented in combination to the world. In every particular they form a complete contrast to the Greek romances. As the fictions concerning the Round Table, in common with all other tales of chivalry, are full of stories of giants and enchanters, they have no claim to probability of incident in one sense of the term, and even that species of verisimilitude, which we expect in the actions and

machinations of unearthly beings, is more often violated than preserved.

The story is invariably told in the person of the author, and in this the writers of romance have perhaps acted judiciously. As the exploits of so many knights were to be related, it would not have suited to put the account of them in the mouth of the principal character, as he could not be minutely acquainted with adventures, in which, for the most part, he had no concurrence. The story is never carried on, as in the Greek romances, in the form of an epic poem, commencing in the middle of the action, but truly begins with the egg of Leda—the adventures of the father or grand-sire of the hero. The romance continues through a period of twenty or thirty years, and concludes with the death of the principal character, or his retirement into a hermitage; or drags us through a long list of descendants. The interest, also, is too much divided, and the part of the titular hero is not always the most considerable. He appears and vanishes like a spirit, and we lose sight of him too soon to regard him as the most important character in the work. In the Greek romances, all the adventures accelerate or impede the solution of the fable; but in the tales of chivalry there is a total want of unity of design, which prevents our

carrying on the story in our mind, and distracts our attention. Indeed, I believe that in the metrical romances, and those few that were originally written in prose, the author had no idea where he was to stop; he had formed no skeleton of the story, nor proposed to himself a conclusion to which his insulated adventures should lead.

With respect to those excellencies which have been termed the ornaments of fictitious narrative: the sentiments in the romances of chivalry are few, and are neither acute nor elegant. The characters of the heroes are not well shaded nor distinguished. The knight, however, is always more interesting than the heroine, which must appear strange when we reflect that these romances were composed in an age when devotion to the ladies formed the essence of chivalry, and that it is quite the reverse in the Greek romances, though, at the time in which they were written, women acted a very inferior part in society. In the romance of *Perceval*, he appears a great deal, and *Blanche-fleur* very little. In some romances, as *Meliadus*, there is no heroine at all, and the mistresses of *Lancelot* and *Tristan*, are women of abandoned character.

The charm of the style and beauty of the descriptions form the most pleasing features of the

romances of chivalry. There is something in the simplicity of the old French tongue which surpasses that of all other nations, and, from an assiduous perusal of romances, where it is exhibited in its greatest richness and beauty, we may receive much additional insight into the etymology of our own language.

M. de Sainte Palaye talks in high terms of the light which these works are calculated to throw on the labours of the genealogist, and of the information which they afford with regard to the progress of the arts among our ancestors. That writer was an enthusiast for this species of lore; and, like other enthusiasts, was disposed to exaggerate its importance and value. That the romances of chivalry are curious as a picture of manners, and interesting as efforts of the imagination, in a certain stage of the progress of the human mind, may indeed be granted; but with this exception, and the pleasure occasionally afforded by the *naiveté* of the language, the most insipid romance of the present day equals them as a fund of amusement, and is not much inferior to them as a source of instruction.

Those, too, who are accustomed to associate the highest purity of morals with the manners of chivalry, will be greatly deceived. Indeed, in their

moral tendency, many of the romances are highly reprehensible. In some, as *Perceforest*, particular passages are exceptionable, and the general scope in others, where the principal character is a knight, engaged, with the approbation of all, in a love intrigue with the wife of his friend or his sovereign. In one of the best of these romances, *Tristan* carries on an amour through the whole work with the queen of his benefactor and uncle. I need not mention the gallantries of *Lancelot* and *Geneura*, nor the cold hard-hearted infidelity of *Artus de la Bretagne*. "The whole pleasure of these bookes," says *Ascham*, with some truth and *naïveté*, "standeth in two specyall poyntes, in open mans slughter and bolde bawdrie, in which bookes those be counted the noblest knights that doe kill most men without any quarrell, and commit fowlest adoulteries by sutlest shifts, as *Syr Launcelott* with the wife of *Kynge Arthure* his maister; *Syr Tristram* with the wife of *Kyng Marke* his vncl; *Syr Lamerocke* with the wife of *King Lote*, that was his own aunte. This is good stuffe for wise men to laugh at, or honest men to take pleasure at."

CHAPTER IV.

Romances of Chivalry relating to Charlemagne and his Peers.—Chronicle of Turpin.—Huon de Bourdeaux.—Guerin de Monglave.—Gallien Rhetoré.—Miles and Ames.—Jourdain de Blaves.—Ogier le Danois, &c.

IT was formerly shown that the romances relating to Arthur and the knights of the Round Table were in a great measure derived from the History of Geoffrey of Monmouth. It now remains for us to investigate what influence the chronicle falsely attributed to Turpin, or Tilpin, archbishop of Rheims, the contemporary of Charlemagne, exercised over the fabulous stories concerning that prince and his paladins.

This chronicle is feigned to be addressed from Viennes, in Dauphiny, to Leoprandus, dean of Aquisgranensis (Aix la Chapelle), but was not

written, in fact, till the end of the eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century. The real author seems not to be clearly ascertained, but is supposed by some to have been a Canon of Barcelona, who attributed his work to Turpin.

This production, it is well known, turns on the expedition of Charlemagne to the peninsula. Some French writers have denied that Charlemagne ever was in Spain, but the authority of Eginhart is sufficient to establish the fact. It seems certain, that about the year 777, the assistance of Charlemagne was invoked by one of those numerous sovereigns, among whom the Spanish provinces were at that time divided; that, on pretence of defending his ally from the aggressions of his neighbours, he extended his conquests over a great part of Navarre and Arragon; and, finally, that on his return to France he experienced a partial defeat from the treacherous attack of an unexpected enemy. These simple events have given rise to the famous battle of Roncesvalles, and the other extravagant fictions recorded in the chronicle of Turpin.

Charlemagne, according to that author, having conquered Britain, Italy, Germany, and many other countries, proposed to give himself some repose, though the Saracens were not yet extirpated; but, while in this frame of mind, he one night

perceived a cluster of stars,¹ which, commencing their procession at the Frisian sea, moved by way of Germany and France into Galicia. This phenomenon being repeated, attracted the thoughts of Charles, but he could form no rational conjecture as to what was portended. The prodigy, which eluded the waking researches of the monarch, was satisfactorily expounded in a vision. A figure appeared to Charles while he was asleep, introduced itself as the apostle James, and announced that the planetary march typified the conquest of Spain, adding, that he had himself been slain by King Herod, and that his body had long lain concealed in Galicia. Hence, continued he, I am astonished that you have not delivered *my* land from the yoke of the Saracens. The apostle's appropriation of territory was somewhat whimsical, but Charles did not dispute his title. This prince, however, seems not to have been renowned for a retentive memory, and accordingly the apostle took the precaution, on the following night, of renewing his suggestion.

In consequence of these successive admonitions, Charles entered Spain with a large army, and invested Pampeluna. He lay three months before

¹ "Intentione sagaci (says Eginhart) siderum cursum curiosissime rimabatur." (C. 25).

this town, but could not take it; because, says the chronicle, it was impregnable. At the end of this period, however, he bethought himself of prayer, on which the walls followed the example of their tottering prototypes of Jericho. The Saracens who chose to embrace Christianity were spared, but those who persisted in infidelity were put to the sword. Charles then paid his respects to the sarcophagus of James, and Turpin had the satisfaction of baptizing a great proportion of the Gallicians in the neighbourhood.

The main point with this bishop and his master, was to destroy all the idols which could be discovered; an undertaking which, among a people who abominate idolatry, must have required a very patient research. At length these images were completely extirpated, except an obstinate mawmet at Cadiz, which could not be broken, because it was inhabited by a troop of demons.

After this Charles founded a number of churches, and endowed them with much wealth; grants which have been reclaimed with great zeal by the successor, who boasts him as a prototype.

Charles had scarcely returned to France, when a strenuous pagan, named Aigolandus, recovered the whole country, which obliged the French monarch to return with great armies, of which he

gave the command to Milo, the father of Orlando.

While these troops were at Bayonne, a soldier, named Romaricus, died, after having ordered one of his relations to sell his horse, and distribute the price among the clergy and the poor. His kinsman sold the horse, but spent the money in carousing. After thirty days the deceased, who had been detained that time in purgatory, appeared in a dream, upbraided his faithless executor for the misapplication of the alms, and notified to him that he might depend on being in Tartarus in the course of the following day. While reporting this uncomfortable assurance next morning to his fellow soldiers, he is hurried off by a flight of demons, and dashed against a rock as a preliminary to subsequent punishment.

After this there follows a long account of the war with Aigolandus, which was first carried on by two hundred, or two thousand, soldiers, on one part, engaging an equal number of the enemy: but at length a general battle was fought, in which were slain *forty thousand* Christians, Milo the commander of the forces, and the horse of Charles. Next day, however, the French having been reinforced by *four thousand* men from the coast of Italy, Aigolandus fled to a different part of the penin-

sula, and Charles, who appears to have set the example to his successor, of returning to his own country before Spain was entirely subdued, departed for France.

Aigolandus now carried the war into Gascony, followed by the Moabites, Ethiopians, Parthians, and Africans. At Sanctona (Kantonge), previous to a great battle, certain Christians having fixed their spears in the ground towards night, found them decorated next morning with leaves, ornaments which signified to the proprietors of these warlike instruments that they were about to obtain the crown of martyrdom. Aigolandus was defeated in the battle with the loss of four thousand of his troops, and fled to Pampeluna. Thither he was followed by Charles, and an army of a hundred and thirty-four thousand men. On this occasion the reader is presented with a list of the chief warriors, among whom are mentioned the names of Orlando, Rinaldo, Oliviero, and Gano. Charles having arrived at Pampeluna, received a message from Aigolandus, requesting a truce till his army should come forth fully prepared for war.

This being granted, Aigolandus in the interval paid a visit to Charles, and was much astonished to hear himself attacked as an usurper in the Ara-

bic tongue, which Charles had learned at Coletus (Thoulouse). Aigolandus expostulated, that his competitor had no right either in his own person, or derived from his ancestors, to the throne of Spain ; but Charles replied, that the country must be conquered for the extension of the Christian religion. This brought on a theological dispute between the two sovereigns, which terminated in a resolution to fight on the following day, with a hundred soldiers against a hundred, and a thousand against a thousand : but Aigolandus being ultimately vanquished in this singular species of warfare, agreed to be baptized with his people. For this purpose he came to Charles next day, and found that monarch carousing, while thirteen naked beggars were sitting on the ground looking on the feast. The malapert heathen asked who these were. Charles replied, rather unfortunately, that they were the people of God whom he was feeding, and that they represented the apostles. Aigolandus thereupon notified that he would have nothing to do with such a faith.

Next day a pitched battle was fought, in which Aigolandus having only a hundred thousand troops, and his enemy a superiority of thirty-four thousand, was entirely defeated, and was himself slain.

Charles next carried on a war against Furra, a prince of Navarre. On the approach of a battle, Charles prayed that the sign of the cross might appear on the shoulder of those who were fated to perish in the action. Those who were marked in consequence of this application, Charles shut up in his oratory; but on returning from the battle, in which he vanquished his enemy, he found that all those he had in ward were dead, to the number of a hundred and fifty, which evinced the impiety of his precaution.

While in Navarre, it is reported to Charles that a Syrian giant of first-rate enormity, called Ferracutus (the Ferrau of the Italians), had appeared at Nagera. This creature possessed most exuberant proportions: he was twelve cubits high, his face was a cubit in length, and his nose a measured palm. As soon as Charles arrived at Nagera, this unwieldy gentleman insisted on single combat. Ogerius the Dane was selected as the Christian champion, but the giant taking him under his arm, carried him off to the town. Having served a succession of knights in a similar manner, Orlando at length went out against him. The Saracen, as usual, commenced the attack by pulling his antagonist from the saddle, and rode off with him, till Orlando, exerting all his force, seized him by

the chin, and both fell to the ground. When they had remounted, Orlando thinking to kill the pagan, only cut off the head of his horse. Ferrau being now on foot, Orlando struck him a blow on the arm that knocked the sword out of his hand; on which the giant slew his adversary's horse with a pat of his fist. After this the opponents fought on foot, and with swords, till towards evening, when Ferrau demanded a truce till next day.

In the morning Orlando had recourse to a new sort of implement; he attacked his enemy with an immense club, which had no more effect than the finer weapon. The champions now assaulted each other with stones; but when this species of warfare was at the hardest, the giant being overpowered with sleep, again begged a truce. When he had composed himself to rest, his courteous antagonist placed a stone below his head, that he might sleep more softly. When he awoke, Orlando took an opportunity of asking him how he was so hardy, that he neither dreaded sword nor baton. The giant, who must have been more remarkable for strength than caution, explained the whole matter, by acknowledging that he was every where invulnerable except in the navel. Ferrau, in his turn, made less pertinent enquiries concerning the name, lineage, and faith of his foe. This last subject be-

ing started, Orlando, hoping to make a convert, explained the articles of his creed. The giant opened the controversy by questioning the possibility of three being one, but Orlando vanquished his arithmetical scruples by a number of ingenious illustrations; as that an almond is a single nut, though it consists of three things, the husk, the shell, and the kernel. The disputant replied, that he now understood how three made one, but that he was scandalized at a virgin producing. Orlando reminded him that there was nothing more remarkable in this, than in the original creation of Adam. The giant readily waived this point, but could not comprehend how a God could die. The arguments on this head he seems to have been as little prepared to canvass as the other topics, but entrenched himself within what he considered his last strong-hold, that the God who had died could not come alive again. Orlando argued that there was nothing impossible in this, as Elijah and Elisha readily revived after their death, and that the dead cubs of a lioness can be resuscitated on the third day, by the breath of the mother. Orlando must, no doubt, have expected, that the ingenuity of this last illustration would have completed the work of conversion; what then must have been his disappointment, when the pertinacious Saracen, by

demanding that a sword should be admitted into the conference, proved that his head was as impenetrable to argument, as his body to the incomparable edge of Durindana. In the ensuing combat, Orlando made great use of the information he had received concerning the perforable part of his antagonist, who, being slain in consequence, the city of Nagera surrendered to the arms of Charlemagne.

After this success, the French monarch received intelligence that Ebraim, king of Sibia (Seville), who had escaped from the battle before Pampeluna, was encamped at Cordova, ready to resist his invasion. Charles, without loss of time, marched to the south of Spain. When the French vanguard approached the enemy, it found that the troops of the hostile army wore bearded masks, that they had added horns to their heads, and that each soldier held a drum in his hand, which he beat with prodigious violence. The horses, quite unaccustomed to this sort of masquerade, immediately took fright, and spread considerable confusion in the Christian army, which with difficulty retreated to an eminence. Next day, however, previous to an attack, Charles ordered his horses to be hood-winked, and their ears to be stopped. This stratagem, or *ars mirabilis*, as it is called in

the chronicle, rendered useless the martial prelude of the enemy, and gained Charles the victory. A similar device is resorted to, on a like occasion, in the metrical romance of Richard Cœur de Lion by the English monarch.

The capture of Cordova was the immediate fruit of the success of Charlemagne, and Spain being now entirely subdued, the conqueror made a proper partition of the kingdom. He bestowed Navarre on the Britons, Castile on the French, and Arragon on the Greeks, while Andalusia and Portugal were assigned to the Flemings.

After the account of this distribution, the historian most seasonably introduces a description of the person of his hero, and the capacities of his stomach. As to his external appearance, he had dark hair, a ruddy countenance, a stern aspect, but a graceful and elegant form. This, indeed, appears from his dimensions, for his legs were thick, his altitude eight feet, and his belly protuberant. His daily consumption of provision, though almost incredible, scarcely exceeds that of Lewis XIV., of whose diet an account has been served up in the Walpoliana. During night, Charles was guarded by a hundred and twenty of the orthodox, who relieved each other during three watches, ten being placed at his head, ten at his feet, and the same number

on either side, each holding a drawn sword in one hand and a burning torch in the other.

When Charles had arrived as far as Pampeluna on his return to France, he bethought himself that he had yet left in Spain two Saracen kings, Marsirius (the same who in Ariosto is present at the siege of Paris by Agramante), and his brother Beligandus, who reigned jointly at Caesaraugusta (Saragossa). To these miscreants he dispatched Gannalon (the Gan Traditor of Italian poets) to expatiate on the necessity of their paying tribute and receiving baptism. They sent Charles a quantity of sweet wine and a thousand hours, but at the same time bribed the ambassador to betray his master. Gannalon, on his return to headquarters, reported that Marsirius was well disposed to become a Christian and to pay tribute. Trusting to this information, Charles made a disposition on his march to France, by which he lost the half of his army. He himself passed the Pyrenees in safety with part of his troops; but the second division, commanded by Orlando, consisting of 20,000 men, was unexpectedly attacked by a guerrilla of 50,000 Saracens, and was cut to pieces, except Orlando and a few knights.¹

¹ The valley of Roncesvalles, where this catastrophe is supposed to have happened, lies to the north-east of Pam-

The main body of the pagans having retired, Orlando discovered a stray Saracen, whom he bound to a tree. After this exploit he ascended an eminence, and sounded his ivory horn, which rallied around him a hundred Christians, the remains of his army. Though the pagans had, with little loss to themselves, reduced his soldiers from 20,000 to 100, Orlando by no means despaired of discomfiting the host of his enemy. He returned with his small band to the Saracen he had put in durance, and threatened to kill him unless he would show him Marsirius. The Saracen yielded to so powerful an argument, and pointed out his king, who was distinguished by his bay horse and round shield. Orlando rushed among the pagans and slew their monarch, which induced Beligandus to fall back with his army on Saragossa. In this brilliant enterprise the hundred Christians were killed, and their commander severely wounded. Wandering through a forest, Orlando arrived alone at the entrance to the pass of Cisera, where, exhausted with wounds and grieving for the loss of his army, he threw himself under a tree. As a re-

peluna. It extends to St Jean Pied de Port in Basse Navarre, and receives its name from the mountain of Roncesvalles, which terminates this plain, and is accounted the highest of the Pyrenees.

freshment he commenced a long address to his sword Durindana, which he complimented with all the superlatives in the Latin language. Fortitudine firmissime, capulo eburneo Candidissime, cruce aurea Splendidissime, &c. &c.

The dying champion next blew his horn with such force that he burst it. Charles, who was then in Gascony, heard the sound distinctly, and wished to return to the succour of his nephew, but was persuaded by Gannalon that he could be in no danger, and that he was merely taking the diversion of hunting in the forests. The noise, however, brought to him Theodoricus, the only surviving knight. Orlando had received the sacrament that morning, and had confessed himself to certain priests, which this learned chronicle informs us was the universal custom of knights before proceeding to battle. Nothing, therefore, remained for the hero but to make a long prayer before he expired.

At this very moment Turpin was standing by King Charles saying mass for the souls of certain persons lately deceased, and informs the reader, that while thus employed, he heard the songs of the angels who were conveying Orlando to Heaven. At the same time a phalanx of demons passed before the archbishop, and notified that they

were so far on their way to Gehenna with the soul of one Marsirius, but that Michael, with an angel crowd, was conveying the trumpeter aloft (*Tubicinem virum, cum multis Michael fert ad superna*). As no person could doubt the accuracy of these respectable deponents, Turpin announced to Charles the death of his nephew. Charles immediately returned to Roncesvalles, where he uttered a learned lamentation over the remains of Orlando, whom he compared to Samson, Saul, Jonathan, and Judas Macabeus, and then embalmed the body with balsam, myrrh, and aloes.

Charles now thought of taking vengeance on the heathen, as an incitement to which the sun held out to him the same encouragement it had formerly done to Joshua. By this means he came up with the Saracens, while yet reposing on the banks of the Ebro in the neighbourhood of Saragossa. Of them he killed four thousand, a favourite number with this historian, and then returned to Roncesvalles. Here he instituted an enquiry into the conduct of Gannalon, and the champion of that traitor having been slain in single combat, he was tied to the four most ferocious horses in the army, and thus torn to pieces.

There is next related the manner in which the

Christians preserved the bodies of their friends, and the final interment of each species of mummy.¹

The emperor having returned to Paris, St Denis informed him, in a dream, that all those who had fallen in Spain had their sins forgiven; and at the same time took the opportunity of mentioning that a similar mercy would be extended to those who gave money for building his church. Those who contributed willingly were freed from all servitude, whence the name of Gaul was changed into France.

Charles had been much debilitated by his campaign in the peninsula. For the sake of the warm baths he repaired to Leodio (Liege), where he built a palace, in which was painted the story of his wars in Spain. Now it fell out that one day, while Turpin, who resided at Viennes, was officiating before the altar, an host of demons, who

¹ The origin and incidents of this expedition of Charlemagne are told in a totally different manner by the Spanish historians. They assert that Charlemagne was called into Spain by Alphonso King of Leon, on a promise to nominate him as successor if he would assist in the expulsion of the Moors. Charlemagne was successful in his efforts against the infidels, but the nobles and chieftains of Alphonso disapproving of the ulterior part of their sovereign's compact, supported by Bernardo del Carpio, and at length by their own monarch, attacked and cut to pieces an immense army, with which the French emperor had encamped on the plain of Roncesvalles.

seem to be the newsmongers in this history, passed before him with unusual velocity. Having interrogated one of these, who resembled an Ethiopian; and was lagging behind the rest, he was advertised they were all going to attend at the death of Charles, and hurry his soul to Tartarus. Turpin requested that, having dispatched their errand, they would return with the earliest intelligence. The fiends were faithful to their appointment, but were reduced to the mortifying acknowledgment that a Galician, without a head, having weighed the sins and merits of Charles, had deprived them of their expected prize, and conveyed the soul in a quite contrary direction from what they had intended. In fifteen days after, a special messenger or express arrived at Viennes, who confirmed the deposition of the demons as to the death of Charles, a loss which could have excited no surprise, as the sun and moon had prepared the minds of his subjects for the event, by assuming a black colour for six days preceding his decease. Besides, his name was spontaneously effaced from a church, and a wooden bridge over the Rhine, which took six years to build, had been recently consumed by internal fire.

Turpin concludes his history with a remark, which seems to be intended as the moral of the

whole work, that he who builds a church on earth cannot fail of obtaining a palace in Heaven.

I have given this minute analysis of the absurd chronicle of Turpin in deference to the common opinion, that it had a remarkable influence on the early romances relating to Charlemagne, and thence on the splendid monuments of human genius that have been erected by the Italian poets.

It must, however, be remarked, that there are few incidents in this work which breathe any thing of the spirit of romantic fiction. There are no castles nor dragons, no amorous knights, and no distressed damsels. The chronicle is occupied with wars on an extensive scale, and with the theological controversies of the chiefs of the Saracen and Christian armies. Some wonders are, indeed, related, but they more resemble the miracles of the monkish legends than the beautiful fables that decorate romance. These fictions, according to the principles already established, must have flowed from other sources, though the historical materials to be found in some of the romances of Charlemagne may have been derived from the chronicle. It has been much doubted whether the Italian poets used the original Turpin. Boiardo and Ariosto quote him for stories of which he does not say a single word, and which are the most absurd and incredi-

ble in their poems; as Voltaire, subsequently, in the *Pucelle d'Orleans*, laid the *onus probandi* on the Abbé Tritheme. Thus in the *Orlando Furioso*,

Scrive Turpino, come furo ai Passi
Dell alto Atlante, che i cavalli loro
Tutti in un punto diventaron Sassi.—C. 44.

The incidents in the *Morgante Maggiore* of Pulci are those which approach nearest to the chronicle, yet Crescimbeni has asserted that it was never seen by that father of romantic poetry. The conclusion of the *Morgante*, however, seems almost copied from Turpin. Gano is there sent ambassador to King Marsilio to negotiate a treaty: he treacherously writes that this king is ready to pay tribute, and requests Charlemagne to send his paladins to Roncesvalles to receive it. There they are attacked by the Saracens. Orlando sounded his horn, but Gano at first persuaded Charles that he was hunting. At the third blast, however, he proceeded to Spain, but Orlando was dead before his arrival. He then besieged and took Saragossa; and, after the return to France, Gano was pulled to pieces by four horses. These circumstances bear a stronger resemblance to the original Turpin than to any intermediate romance, for it is clear that the French romance of *Morgante* is not the original, but a version of the Italian poem.

However this may be, it is probable, from its wide circulation and great popularity, that the chronicle of Turpin had some influence on the romances of Charlemagne, or at least the metrical tales from which they were immediately formed. The work was very generally read in the fourteenth century, and was several times translated into French with variations and additions. The first of these is by Jehans, who lived as early as the time of Philip Augustus, the next by Gaguin, who was librarian to Charles VIII. There were also a number of French metrical paraphrases and versions, which were nearly coeval with the original chronicle.

In the reign of St Louis there appeared a metrical romance on the exploits of Charlemagne by an unknown author, which chiefly relates to the wars of that monarch with the Saxons, and their celebrated chief Guitichens (Witikend).

About the time of Philip the Hardy, Girard, or Girardin, of Amiens, composed a metrical romance on the actions of Charlemagne, divided into three books. The first gives an account of an early expedition of Charles, under the name of Maine, into Arragon, to assist Galafré, a Saracen, whose daughter he marries after vanquishing her father's enemies; a story which, in a much later romance, is told of Charles Martel. The second book contains

his wars in Italy against Didier King of the Lombards, and differs little from what is contained in the authentic histories relating to Charlemagne. The third book is a metrical version of the chronicle of Turpin.

Nearly at the same time, in another voluminous metrical romance, an account was given of Charlemagne's preparations for his expedition to the Holy Land, and the adventures of some of his knights who preceded him to that region. There is nothing, however, said of the conquest of Palestine, and indeed the reality of this enterprise is denied by all authentic historians, though it found its way into many of the absurd and fabulous chronicles of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

There is another work somewhat resembling the chronicle of Turpin, which, according to the authors of *L' Histoire Littéraire de la France*, was written in 1015, but the Count de Caylus places its composition in the reign of Lewis IX. It is called *Philumena*, and receives its name from that of a pretended secretary of Charlemagne, but was in fact written by a monk of the Abbey de Grasse. It contains an account of the exploits of the emperor against the Moors of Spain, but is more especially devoted to the history and miracles of the abbey, the foundation of which the author attributes to Charlemagne.

In the *Reali di Francia*, an ancient Italian chronicle, we are presented with a fabulous account of the early ages of the French monarchy previous to the age of Charlemagne, the first exploits of that monarch, and the amours of Milo, the father of Orlando, with Bertha, Charlemagne's sister.

There were also many metrical French romances on the subject of the paladins of Charlemagne. The northern bards, who followed Rollo to France, introduced their native traditions; those, for instance, relating to Ogier the Dane, and other northern heroes, who were afterwards enlisted into the tales of chivalry. The earliest French metrical romances related, as we have seen, to Arthur; but when Normandy had fallen under the dominion of the kings of France, and that country began to look on England with that eye of jealousy, which was the prelude to more open hostility, the native minstrels changed their theme of the praises of the knights of the Round Table to the more acceptable subject of the paladins of Charlemagne.

The ancient chronicles and metrical romances above mentioned, may be considered as sources which supplied with materials the early writers of the prose romances relating to Charlemagne; but though they may have suggested the expedition to Spain, the Holy Land, and several other circum-

stances, the authors of the prose romances of Charlemagne seem to have written more from fancy, and less slavishly to have followed the metrical romances, by which they were preceded, than the authors of the fabulous compilations concerning Arthur. They added incidents which were the creatures of their own imagination, and embellished their dreams with the *speciosa miracula*, derived from the fables of Arabia, or the northern and classical mythology. Heroes of romance, besides, are frequently decorated with the attributes belonging to their predecessors or descendants. Many of the events related in the romantic history of Charlemagne are historically true with regard to Charles Martel. When the fame of the latter was eclipsed by the renown of Charlemagne, the songs of the minstrels, and legends of the monks, transferred the exploits of the Armorican chief to his more illustrious descendant.

Thus, from the ancient chronicles and the early metrical romances ; from the exploits of individual heroes, concentrated in one ; from the embellishments added by the imagination of the author, and the charms of romantic fiction, sprung those formidable compilations we are about to encounter, and which form the second division of the Romances of Chivalry.

It is still more difficult to fix the dates of the fabulous tales relating to Charlemagne than of those of the Round Table.

HUON OF BOURDEAUX,¹

though a romance of considerable antiquity, is not supposed to be anterior to the invention of printing, as there are no manuscripts of it extant. The oldest edition is one in folio, without date, and the second is in quarto, 1516. There are also different impressions in the original language of a more recent date. Huon of Bourdeaux, indeed, seems to have been a favourite romance, not only among the French, but also with other nations. The English translation, executed by Lord Berners in the reign of Henry VIII., has gone through three editions, and it has lately formed the subject of the finest poem in the German language.

As the incidents in the Oberon of Wieland are nearly the same with those in the old French romance, and are universally known through the beautiful translation of Mr Sotheby, it will not be necessary to give so full an analysis of the work

¹ Histoire de Huon de Bourdeaux Pair de France duc de Guienne.

as it would be otherwise entitled to, from its antiquity, singularity, and beauty.

Huon, and his brother Girard, while travelling from their own domains of Guyenne to pay homage to Charlemagne, are treacherously way-laid by Charlot, the emperor's son. Huon having killed, in self-defence, the favourite son of his sovereign, could not obtain pardon, except on the whimsical condition that he should proceed to the court of the Saracen Amiral, or Emir Gaudisse—that he should appear while this potentate was at table—cut off the head of the bashaw, who sat at his right-hand—kiss his daughter three times, and bring, as a tribute to Charlemagne, a lock of his white beard, and four of his most efficient grinders.

Before setting out on this excursion, Huon proceeds to Rome, where he is advised to perform a pilgrimage to Palestine, and thence depart on the remainder of his expedition.

Having complied with this injunction, and visited the holy sepulchre, Huon sets out for the sea-coast, but wanders in a forest, where he supports himself with wild fruits and honey till the end of the third day, when he meets a man of gigantic stature, naked, as far as clothes were concerned, but covered with long hair. This person addresses

Huon in a dialect of the French language, informs him that his name is Gerasme, and that he is brother to the mayor of Bourdeaux; he had been made prisoner in a battle with the Saracens, but having escaped from slavery, and possessing much of the *savoir vivre*, he had judiciously chosen to reside fifteen years in the forest in his present comfortable predicament.

Gerasme leads Huon over the Isthmus of Suez into Africa; and when he had conducted him thus far, he points out two roads to the states of Gaudisse, one a journey of three months, the other less tedious, but extremely dangerous, as it passed through the forest inhabited by Oberon, who metamorphosed the knights who were bold enough to trespass, into hobgoblins, and animals of various descriptions.

Huon having, of course, decided in favour of the most perilous road, penetrates into the thickest part of the forest. Having followed a path through the wood to a considerable distance, he comes to a sort of star formed by alleys, which extended as far as the eye could reach, except one, which was terminated by a palace of most beautiful structure, of which the gilded roof was adorned with cupolas overlaid with diamonds. From this superb edifice issued a costly chariot, in which was

seated a child, apparently four years of age, of resplendent beauty, and clothed in a robe sparkling with precious stones. The dwarf accosts Huon and his attendants, but, enraged at their silence, raises a frightful tempest. A voice is heard in the air, saying, 'Huon, it is in vain you fly me.' Huon escapes to a monastery, but is soon overtaken by Oberon, (for he was the charioteer), who allays the storm, and sounds a magic horn, which throws the attendants of Huon and the monks into convulsions of dancing. Oberon, at length, having ceased to blow the horn, enters into conversation with Huon : he commences an account of his pedigree, and informs his audience that he is the son of Julius Cæsar and the fairy Chifalonia, lady of the hidden isle ; but that his mother having a malevolent sister, he was exhibited as a hideous dwarf for thirty years, after which he was restored to his original form. He farther professed the utmost esteem for Huon and his kindred, and as a proof of regard gave him a goblet, which, in the hands of a good man, spontaneously filled with wine, and also the ivory horn, which, if softly sounded, would make every one dance who was not of irreproachable character, and if blown with violence would bring Oberon himself to his assistance.

Fortified with these gifts, Huon proceeds on

his journey. After travelling a few days, he arrives at the city of Tourmont, which he finds is governed by one of his uncles, who, in his youth, had been taken captive by corsairs, and having become the slave of the Emir Gaudisse, had been deputed to govern a Saracen city as a reward for renouncing the Christian religion. Huon falls on means to be introduced to this renegado, and presents himself as his nephew. The apostate receives him with apparent kindness, but privately meditates his destruction. He accordingly invites his nephew and Gerasme to a sumptuous banquet, while his guards are placed in the ante-chamber ready to attack the Christians. During the repast Huon presents his uncle with the enchanted goblet; but, as his relative was a person of abandoned character, the liquor instantly disappears. Exasperated at this provocation, he rather precipitates matters by throwing the cup at his nephew's head, who is thus, in some measure, prepared for the attack now made by a whole legion of eunuchs and agas. Huon instantly sounds his horn, and while all present are in consequence dancing with prodigious agility, he escapes to his caravansary; but before he has time to leave Tourmont, the governor having recovered his senses and his resentment, marches with all his troops to attack Huon, who, considering this an

occasion sufficiently important to demand the assistance of Oberon, is immediately reinforced by an army of a hundred thousand men, with the fairy as generalissimo. The governor's troops being cut to pieces, and he himself slain, Huon prepares for his departure. Oberon gives him a last advice concerning his journey, warning him particularly not to approach the tower possessed by Angoulafre, a cruel giant, who could only be vanquished by a person defended by a certain hauberk, which the monster unfortunately kept in his custody.

To this very tower Huon directs his course, and, entering it while the giant is asleep, he arms himself with the fatal hauberk, awakens the lord of the manor, and kills him by the assistance of a lady, who was confined there, and who finds a cousin in her deliverer.

Huon follows up this exploit by possessing himself of a ring which had been sent to the giant as a sort of tribute from Gaudiase; and having crossed an arm of the sea, he at length arrives at Babylon (Bagdad) in Arabia, where that emir held his court.

Having entered the palace, and passed the saloon where the emir was banqueting with a few tributary sultans, Huon suddenly interrupts the pleasures of the entertainment by removing the

head of the King of Hyrcania, who was the intended husband of Esclarmonde, the daughter of Gaudisse, and who was then seated at the right-hand of her father. He next fulfils the second part of his mission, on the lips of the princess, and concludes with promulgating his designs against the beard and grinders of the emir. This potentate was but ill prepared with an answer to so novel a proposition, and a mode of address somewhat unusual at his board. Huon, however, having produced the ring of Angoulafre, is at first heard with tolerable patience; but when he mentions how he became possessed of it, the emir orders him to be apprehended. The knight at first defends himself with great courage, and kills a number of the assailants, till at last overpowered by numbers he has recourse to his horn; but he blew it in vain. At the first gate of the palace, Huon, in order to gain admittance, had professed himself a mussulman, a falsehood which rendered the horn of no avail, since from that moment his character had ceased to be irreproachable. He is loaded with chains and precipitated into a dungeon, where the emir intended he should be tormented with the punishments of hunger and bondage, as preparatory to that of being burned alive, which was in reserve. Huon receives sustenance, however, and many consolatory visits from

the beautiful Esclarmonde, interviews which must have been the more agreeable, as he could not be conscious of any claims to the favour of that princess, farther than having cut off the head of her lover, insulted her father, and knocked out the brains of his body-guards.

After a few tender conversations, Esclarmonde professes herself a Christian. In many of the romances of Charlemagne, the fable hinges on the assistance given by Saracen princesses to Christian knights, and the treasons practised for their lovers' sake against their fathers or brothers. It must, indeed, be confessed, that they are not of the sex to which the Mahometan religion is the most seductive.

The emir, at the conclusion of a fortnight, proposes that his prisoner should endure the last punishment of conflagration. The jailor, however, who had been bribed by Esclarmonde, informs him that Huon had died two days ago, and had been interred in the dungeon.

At this period, Gerasme, whom we left in the forest, arrives at Bagdad, and, along with Esclarmonde, plots the deliverance of Huon. Their plans are aided by the invasion of Agrapard, the brother of Angeoulafre, who enters the capital at the head of a formidable army, reproaches the emir

(most unreasonably one should think) for not having avenged the death of that giant, and suggests the alternative of paying a triple tribute or denuding himself of his kingdom.

The emir could find no person at his court who would encounter this champion. After cursing his gods at considerable length, and to no purpose, he suddenly expresses a wish that Huon of Bourdeaux were yet alive. This ejaculation extorts from Esclarmonde a confession, that Huon is still in existence. The knight is accordingly brought forth from his dungeon, and the emir promises that if he vanquish Agrapard, he will not only allow his beard to be plucked, but will submit to a partial extraction of his grinders.

Huon having overcome the giant, proposes to Gaudisse, that, in lieu of the despoliation of his beard and grinders, he should submit to be baptized. The emir not relishing this alteration in the agreement, orders Huon to be seized, who, trusting that his long sufferings had now appeased Oberon, sounds the horn with the requisite vehemence. The surmise of the knight is justified by the event. The fairy king appears with a formidable army, and the head of the emir is cut off by an invisible hand. The beard and teeth become an easy prey to the conqueror, and are sewed up

by Oberon in the side of Gerasme, who was in attendance. Huon loads two vessels with the treasures of the emir, and sails for Italy with Esclarmonde, after being threatened by Oberon with the severest punishments, if he should anticipate the delights of matrimony previous to the fulfilment of its graver ceremonies.

In most romances, when a superior being receives a mortal into favour, some test of obedience is required. This is usually violated, and the consequent misfortunes are a source of endless incident. As to Huon, he seems never to have received any injunction from Oberon, without acting in direct opposition to it. Gerasme, foreseeing the fate of the lovers, sets sail for France, carrying in his side the precious deposit of beard and grinders. Scarcely had he left the vessel in which Huon and Esclarmonde are conveyed, when their conduct gives rise to a tempest more boisterous than the description of the youngest poet. The ship goes to pieces on a desert island, where the lovers wander about for some time, and renew the offence that had given rise to the tempest; but, though on shore, they are not permitted to violate the injunctions of Oberon with impunity. A band of corsairs arriving on the island, the captain, who had been a subject of the emir Gaudiase, immedi-

ately recognises Esclarmonde, binds Huon to a tree, and, in hopes of a great recompense, sails with the princess for the capital of Yvoirin, emir of Mondran, and uncle of Esclarmonde. Though Huon was not in the vessel, a tempest drives it to the coast of Anfalerne. The captain having entered one of the ports of that kingdom, Galafre, the ruler of the country, comes on board and kills the master of the vessel, on his refusal to deliver up the princess, who is now conducted to the seraglio, and forced to accept the hand of the emir; but she informs him she had lately made a vow of chastity for two years, which her husband promises to respect.

Oberon, meanwhile, being touched with pity for the misfortunes of Huon, permits Malembun, one of his spirits, to go to his assistance. This emissary, taking Huon on his back, lands him in the territory of King Yvoirin. As the mercy of the fairy king had not extended so far as to provide the delinquent with victuals or raiment, he wanders naked through the country in quest of provisions. In a meadow he falls in with an old man eating heartily, who had formerly been a minstrel at the court of Gaudisse, and engages Huon to carry his musical instruments for meat and clothing. On the same evening they arrive

at the court of Yvoirin. The minstrel performs in such a manner as to obtain rewards from all the courtiers: his attendant also attracts much notice, and plays at chess with the king's daughter.

Yvoirin, long before this time, had been informed of the detention of his niece by Galafre. He had accordingly sent to demand the restitution of Esclarmonde, which being refused, hostilities had commenced between these neighbouring sultans. The day after the arrival of Huon at court, the forces of the enemy appear ranged in order of battle, under the walls of Mondran. Huon having learned the cause of the war, feels every motive for exertion: he procures some rusty arms, mounts an old hackney, and, though thus accoutred, his valour chiefly contributes to the defeat of Galafre, who is forced to return to his own dominions.

A new resource, however, presents itself to the defeated monarch. It will be recollected that Gerasme had left Huon at a most momentous crisis, and the lover had rendered himself culpable so soon after the departure of his friend, that the ship in which Gerasme was embarked, had experienced the full force of the tempest, which wrecked the vessel of Huon and Esclarmonde. He had, in consequence, been driven on the coast of Pales,

time, where he had visited the holy sepulchre, and, in the course of his wanderings, had come to An-falerne, in hopes of receiving some tidings of his master. To Gerasme the king communicates the situation of his affairs, and proposes that he should defy a champion of the army of Yvoirin. Gerasme having consented to this, goes out from An-falerne with a few Christian friends, and, in a short time, finds himself engaged with Huon of Bourdeaux. Having recognised each other in the course of the combat, Gerasme, with great presence of mind, proposes that they should unite their arms, and defeat the miscreants. The small band of Christians makes a prodigious slaughter in the army of Galafre, and pushing on at full speed, gets possession of his capital.

That prince, who seems to have been no less remarkable for rapidity of conception than the Christians, joins the remains of his forces to those of Yvoirin, and begs him to lead them on against Huon, to recover his capital. Galafre is as unsuccessful in the coalition as he was singly. The allied army is totally repulsed in an attack upon the city, and Esclarmonde being now delivered from her captivity in the seraglio, the Christians possess themselves of the treasure of Galafre, and embark on board a vessel in which the mayor

of Bourdeaux, with more good fortune than probability, had arrived during the siege. Huon is landed safe in Italy, and is formally united to Esclarmonde at Rome : but, on his road to the court of Charlemagne, he is way-laid by his brother Girard, who had possessed himself of his dukedom, and was ruling over it with unexampled tyranny. The usurper pays his brother an apparently kind visit at the abbey of St Maurice, where he lodged a few days on his journey to Paris. Having learned from Huon the secret of the treasure contained in the side of Gerasme, he attacks the bearer on his way from the monastery, opens his side, takes out the beard and grinders, and sends him along with his master in chains to Bourdeaux. Girard then proceeds to Paris, informs Charlemagne that his brother has not accomplished the object of his mission, and asks a gift of his dukedom. Charlemagne repairs to Bourdeaux, where Huon is tried by the peers, and the votes being equal, he is condemned by the voice of Charlemagne. Huon and Gerasme are sentenced to be drawn and quartered, and Esclarmonde to be led to the stake. Charlemagne defers the execution till mid-day, that while seated at dinner he may feast his eyes with the punishment of the murderer of his son. The spectacle is about to commence, when suddenly the gates of the hall

in which the emperor was seated, are seized by a formidable army. A splendid table is prepared, and elevated above the sovereign's. Oberon enters the hall to the sound of trumpets and cymbals. The chains drop from the prisoners, and they are arrayed in splendid vestments. Oberon reproaches Charlemagne with injustice, and threatens him with the disclosure of his most secret crimes. He concludes with producing the spoils of the emir, and delivers up Girard to the punishment that had been destined for Huon. The fairy then retires with the same solemnity with which he had entered, after inviting Huon and Esclarmonde to pay him their respects in his enchanted dominions.

The story of Huon of Bourdeaux is here completely finished, but there is a long continuation which seems to be by a different hand, and is of a much later date than the work of which an abstract has been given. In the original romance, Huon begins his exploits by slaying the son of Charlemagne. He recommences his career in this new romance by cutting off the head of the son of Thiery, emperor of Germany. That monarch in revenge carries war into the states of Guienne. Huon defends himself successfully for some time, but at length sets out for the east, to beg assistance from the

brother of Esclarmonde, to whom, though he had murdered his father and seduced his sister, he thought himself entitled to apply.

- During his absence Bourdeaux is taken, and Esclarmonde is conducted captive to the German court, where she is persecuted with love propositions by the emperor.

Huon, while on his voyage to Asia, experiences a tremendous storm. When the tempest has abated, the vessel is carried away by a rapid and irresistible current, which draws it into the whirlpool which connects the waters of the gulph of Persia with the Caspian sea. Huon perceiving a man swimming in the midst of the waters, orders the seamen to slack sails in order to gratify his curiosity. The swimmer proclaims himself to be Judas Iscariot, and recommends to Huon to use every exertion to get out of the whirlpool. At the suggestion of Judas, all the sails being set, the vessel is carried into a deep and tranquil sea, where the pilot having no power over the helm, the ship strikes on a rock of adamant. Huon wanders for some time among tremendous precipices, and sterile vallies. After a long stay in this island he is carried off by a griffin; and, at the end of an aerial voyage, is set down on the top of a high mountain, which seems to have been a place of rendezvous for these ani-

mals. Huon kills four of them, which was rather an ungrateful return for the safe conduct he had received from their fellow-monster. Soon after his arrival on this spot, he is permitted by a celestial voice to gather three apples of the Tree of Youth, which grew by the side of a fountain. Having descended the hill, he reaches the banks of a river, and embarks in a small vessel adorned with gold and precious stones. This boat is carried down a stream, and enters a subterraneous canal lighted by the radiance of the precious stones which formed the channel of the water. The rearing of the waves above is distinctly heard, but after a few hours voyage the bark emerges into a tranquil sea, which Huon recognises as the Persian Gulf. He lands in safety at the port of Tauris, and is well received by an old sultan of that district. On him Huon bestows one of the apples of youth, which gives him the strength and appearance of a man of thirty. From motives of gratitude the sultan puts a fleet and army under the command of Huon, with which he now proceeds to the assistance of Esclarmonde. On his way he lands at the desert island of Abillant, and his fleet being instantly dispersed by a storm of wind, he is obliged to remain : here he ascends a mountain, the summit of which formed a plain, round which a cask was rolling with wonder-

ful noise and velocity. Huon arrests its progress with a hammer, and the inhabitant proclaims himself to be Cain, adding, that the cask is full of serpents and sharp spikes, and that he is destined to roll in it for a certain period. The knight accordingly refuses to interfere in his punishment, and leaves him to prosecute his career in this uncomfortable conveyance.

In the course of his conversation with Cain, Huon was informed that a demon, who had been the contractor for this machine, was waiting for the fratricide in a boat near the coast. Availing himself of this hint, he proceeds to the shore, and the evil spirit mistaking him for Cain, receives him in his bark, and lands him on an opposite coast, where he rejoins his fleet, and sets sail for France.

Huon does not seem to have been in any great haste to bring assistance to Esclarmonde. He visits Jerusalem on his way, and enters most gratuitously into a war with the sultan of Egypt.

When he arrives at Marseilles, he dismisses the Asiatic fleet, and proceeds to pay a visit to his uncle the abbot of Clugny, whom he presents with one of his apples. In the habit of a pilgrim he next comes to the court of Thiery, who agrees to give him back his wife, and receives the third apple as his reward. Huon and Esclarmonde pay a short

visit to their dominions, and then set out, according to invitation, for the enchanted forest of Oberon, who installs Huon in the empire of Faery, and expires shortly after. The remainder of the romance, or rather fairy tale, contains an account of the reign of Huon, and his disputes with Arthur, (who had hoped for the appointment), as to the sovereignty of fairy land; and also the adventures of the Duchess Clairette, the daughter of Huon and Esclarmonde, from whom was descended, according to the romance, the illustrious family of Capet.

The next romance relating to knights contemporary with Charlemagne, is that of

GUERIN DE MONGLAVE,¹

who was son of the duke of Aquitaine, and ruled in Monglave (Lyons), a city he had acquired by his own prowess. Having received intelligence of the death of his father, and the usurpation of the

¹ *Histoire du tres preux et vaillant Guerin de Monglave, lequel fit en son temps plusieurs nobles et illustres faits en armes; et aussi parle des terribles et merveilleux faits de Robastre et Perdrigon, pour secourir le dit Guerin et ses enfants.*

dukedom of Aquitaine by Hunault, who was his natural child, he sends his eldest legitimate son, called Arnaud, against him, and at the same time dismisses his three other sons to push their fortunes in the world. Milon proceeds to Pavia, and Girard and Regnier to the court of Charlemagne. The romance contains the separate adventures of the four knights, of which those of Arnaud alone are in any degree interesting.

The means of Arnaud were scarcely proportioned to the importance of his undertaking; but, though attended only by a single squire, so completely was Hunault detested, that the principal inhabitants invest his brother with the sovereignty of the province. Hunault, unable openly to resist this torrent of unpopularity, has recourse to stratagem. He pretends that he had only meant to preserve the dukedom for his brother, gradually insinuates himself into his confidence, and becomes his chief adviser. In a short while he proposes to him a union with the Saracen princess Fregonda, the daughter of a Spanish sultan, called Florent; and farther, persuades him to pay a visit to the court of that monarch. In hope of obtaining a beautiful princess, and converting an infidel, Arnaud sets out for Spain, accompanied by Hunault,

who had previously informed the sultan that his brother was coming to solicit his daughter in marriage, and to abjure the Christian religion. The sultan and Arnaud are thus put at cross purposes. The former leaves the work of conversion to his daughter, but this princess had no sooner begun to love Arnaud, than she found that she could not endure Mahomet ; Hunault is informed of the sentiments of the princess by his brother Arnaud, and immediately acquaints the sultan. In communicating this intelligence, he proposes that Arnaud should be confined in a dungeon, and at the same time offers on his own part to assume the turban, should Florent agree to assist him in recovering possession of Aquitaine. These proposals being accepted, Arnaud is confined, and Hunault sets out by a retired road for the dutchy. On his way he is suddenly seized with remorse for his apostacy and treason. Hearing a clock strike while in the midst of a forest, he turns towards the place whence the sound proceeded, and arrives at the gate of a hermitage, which is opened by a giant of a horrible aspect. This singular recluse was Robastre, who had been the companion in arms of Guerin of Monglave, and had retired to this forest to perform penance. Hunault insists on confessing his sins,

and the catalogue being finished, Robastre immediately knocks out his brains. The ground of this commentary on the confession is, that he would thus die penitent ; but that if he lived, he would infallibly relapse into iniquity ; a train of reasoning certainly more gigantic than theological.

Robastre next turns his attention to the best means of delivering Arnaud from prison. He goes to consult with Perdrigon, who had been formerly a companion of Guerin, and was once tolerably versed in the black art, but had for some time renounced all his evil practices, and retired to a cell in the same forest with Robastre. This enchanter is at first scrupulous about renewing his intercourse with the devil, but at length satisfies his conscience on the score of good intentions.

The giant arms himself with an old cuirass, which was buried below his hermitage, and throwing over it a robe gains admittance to the court of the sultan Florent, in the character of a dervis. He soon obtains a private interview with the princess, and introduces himself as a Christian, and the friend of Arnaud. In return he is informed by her that she pays frequent visits in secret to Arnaud, to whom she promises to gain him admittance. With this view she acquaints her father that Robastre is the most learned Mollah she had ever conversed with,

and that if admitted to the prisoner he could not fail to convert him. Robastre is thus introduced into the dungeon, and privately concerts with Arnaud the means of escape. A mussulman, who listened at the door, overheard the conversation; and having in consequence discovered that Robastre is not a dervis, he informs the sultan of the deceit, on which the giant is thrown into the same dungeon with Arnaud. In the course of the ensuing night the princess arrives with provisions, with which the Mahometan ladies in romance are always careful, abundantly to supply their lovers. Robastre taking a goblet of water, baptizes the princess, and then unites her to Arnaud. In concert with the jailor he breaks open the trap-door of the prison, and having slain the guards, gets possession of the tower, of which the dungeon formed the foundation.

Arnaud escapes to Aquitaine, that he may assert his sovereignty, and afterwards return to the assistance of Robastre and the princess, who remained together in the tower. In that hold they are besieged by the sultan and his forces, but Robastre makes different *sorties*, in which he is always successful, being aided by the enchantments of his friend Perdrigon, who at one time pelts the Saracens with incessant hail, and at others cuts them

up by means of fantastic knights in black armour. Robastre, availing himself of the confusion into which the Saracens were thrown by one of these attacks, escapes with the princess, and arrives safe in Aquitaine. Here they have the mortification to find that Arnaud had been imprisoned by the maternal uncles of Hunault. They are vanquished, however, in single combat by Robastre. Arnaud is then restored to his dukedom, and also succeeds to the Spanish principality, by the conversion and abdication of his father-in-law. His subjects also become Christians, for in those days they implicitly conformed to the religion of their prince, instead of forcing him to adopt the faith of his people.

During these interesting transactions, Milon, the second son of Guerin of Monglave, had married his cousin, the daughter and heiress of the Duke of Pavia. Regnier had been united to the Duchess of Genoa, after defeating a ponderous giant, who was an unwelcome suitor, and Girard had espoused the Countess of Thoulouse by the interest of Charlemagne, who conceived himself obliged to provide for the children of Guerin of Monglave, as he had, on one occasion, lost his whole kingdom to him at a game of chess.

To these provisions, however, there seems to

have been no end, for Aimery, Arnaud's son, having grown up, came to demand a settlement on the plea of the game at chess. During one of his audiences, at which the queen was present, he seizes her majesty by the foot and overthrows her. Charlemagne thinks it necessary to avenge this insult by besieging Viennes, the capital of Girard's territories, who is assisted in his defence by his three brothers and Robastre. After a good deal of general and promiscuous fighting, it is agreed that the quarrel should be decided by single combat. Roland is chosen on the part of Charlemagne, and Olivier, son of Regnier duke of Genoa, on the side of Girard. These two champions had become acquainted during a truce, and recognising each other in the heat of the combat, they drop their arms and embrace with much cordiality. By their means a reconciliation is effected, and the paladins of France turn their united arms against the Saracens.

In the commencement of the romance of

GALYEN RHETORÉ,¹

which was first printed at Paris in the year 1500, Charlemagne and his paladins proceed incognito to Jerusalem. Having betrayed themselves at that place by their eagerness in search of relics, the patriarch of Jerusalem considers it indispensable that they should pay a visit of ceremony to King Hugues. They find this monarch encamped on a vast plain with his grandees, who were all neat-herds or drovers, and his majesty a waggoner. Roland looked into court, where he counted 100,000 hogs, who were feeding on wheat. The paladins enquired if there was lodging for them, and were told by the porter that he had room for four thousand. On the day of their arrival the French peers were very kindly entertained at table, but, notwithstanding the ample accommodation, they were lodged in the same apartment at night. King Hugues, though a very good man, was extremely curious to learn what strangers said of his hospi-

¹ Nobles prouesses et vaillances de Galyen Rhetoré, fils du noble Olivier le Marquis et de la belle Jacqueline fille du Roi Hugues qui fut Empereur de Constantinople.

talities, and accordingly concealed an interpreter in a corner of the chamber allotted to his guests. The peers being unable to sleep, begin to brag (*gaber*). Roland boasted that he could sound his horn with such force that it would bring down the palace. Ogier, the Dane, averred that he would crumble to dust one of the chief pillars of the edifice. The boasts of Olivier, the youngest of the peers, related to the beautiful Princess Jacqueline, the daughter of Hugues. The African prince is informed of this conversation before retiring to rest, and treats his guests with much less civility, next morning, than he had formerly used. The paladins having learned the cause of his resentment, Orlando is deputed to acquaint him that their boasts were mere pleasantries. The king, however, informs him that he thought they were in very bad taste, and that the paladins must consent to remain his prisoners, or perform what they had undertaken. The French peers accept the latter alternative; and from the fulfilment of the boast of Olivier, sprung Gaijen, the hero of the romance, surnamed Rhetoré, or Restauré, by the fairy who presided at his birth, because by his means there was to be revived in France the high spirit of chivalry, which was in danger of being lost.

by the death of the peers of Charlemagne who perished at Roncevalles.

This young African having grown up, set out for Europe in quest of his father. Having arrived at Genoa, he learned that Charlemagne and his paladins are engaged in an expedition against the Saracens of Spain. To Spain he accordingly directed his course, but met with many adventures, and performed a variety of exploits, before reaching the camp of Charlemagne. Thence he departed for a division of the army, in which he understands his father is brigaded. He arrived after the defeat of Roncevalles, and was only recognised by his father in his last moments.¹ Galyen having performed the last duties to Olivier, was of great service in the subsequent war with Marsilius, and also detected the treason, and insisted on the punishment, of Gano; the account of which nearly corresponds with the detail in the chronicle of Turpin. He was soon, however, obliged to depart on hearing of the death of Hugues, and the usurpation of the crown by the brothers of that prince; he vanquishes them in single combat, rescues his mother, whom they had condemned to death, and afterwards, in her right, ascends the throne.

The two following romances are believed to have

¹ See Appendix, No. XV.

been written in the beginning of the fifteenth century, but the first edition of both is without date. In the prologue to

MILES AND AMES,¹

which shall be first mentioned, the work is said to be drawn from an old book *en vers Picards*. Miles and Ames are also mentioned in the chronicle of Alberic de Troisfontaines, an author of the thirteenth century, who says they perished in the year 774, in an expedition undertaken by Charlemagne against Didier, King of the Lombards. Their story is besides related in the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent de Beauvais, and is there said to have occurred in the reign of King Pepin.

Miles was the son of Anceaume, Count of Clermont, and Ames of his seneschal. The parents of the former, in gratitude for his birth, set out on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In their absence the Count of Limoges seizes on Clermont. The nurse of Miles is in consequence forced to fly with her charge, and beg alms from province to province. Ames, meanwhile, is brought up as a

¹ Le Roman des vaillans Chevaliers Miles et Ames, lesquels en leur vivant firent de grandes prouesses.

foundling by his uncle Regnier of Langres, who durst not educate him as his nephew, because he was a vassal of the Duke of Burgundy, who was an ally of the Count de Limoges. Miles having grown up, repairs to the province of Burgundy, where he forms an intimate friendship with Ames. Their perfect resemblance in appearance is the amusement of every one, and gives rise to many comical mistakes.

Miles, however, being at length discovered to be the son of the rightful Count of Clermont, is forced to leave Burgundy, and flies with his friend Ames to Constantinople. Here Miles meets with his mother, the Countess of Clermont, who was acting as governess to the Greek princess Sidoina. The city was at that time besieged by the Turkish sultan, but he is totally defeated, and the father of Miles, who had been detained a prisoner by the Saracen monarch, is freed from captivity. Miles marries Sidoina, and in a short while ascends in her right the throne of Constantinople.

After some time spent in the cares of his empire, he departs with Ames for France, recovers his paternal inheritance, and bestows a dukedom on his friend. In his absence the Saracens burn his capital, his empress, and her mother, and Miles, in consequence of this conflagration, espouses Bellis-

sande, daughter of Charlemagne, while Ames is united to Lubiane, the heiress of the duke of Friezeland.

Some years having passed in unwonted repose, the friends at length set out on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. When about to return, Ames is unexpectedly smitten with leprosy. On their arrival, Miles is joyfully received by Bellissande; but his unfortunate companion is driven from his own castle by his wife, who appears to have been ignorant of the value of a husband of this description. The servants, whom she then detaches to drown him, being moved with compassion, conduct their master to the castle of Miles, where he is received with the utmost hospitality, and is at length cured by the intervention of St James of Compostella. The two friends, in consequence, set out for Galicia on a pilgrimage to the tomb of that apostle, but are attacked and slain while crossing the Pyrenees, which seems generally to have been for the French an unfortunate theatre of war.

Miles, when he proceeded to Spain, had left two children, Anceaume and Floriselle, in the cradle. These infants were constantly guarded by an ape, who acted as an assiduous nurse, and was gifted with a most excellent understanding and benevolent disposition. Lubiane, the wicked wi-

dow of Ames, resolves, in concert with her brother, on the destruction of these children. The countess, their mother, is privately put to death, and the children carried off, to the great consternation of the ape. After three months detention at the residence of Lubiane they are thrown into the sea. In this extremity two dolphins were fortunately in waiting; one of whom carried Ance-sume to the coast of Provence, where he is picked up and educated by a woodman. The other conducts Floriselle to the shores of Genoa, where he is taken under the protection of a lioness, who introduces him to her cubs, with whom he is gradually accustomed to hunt. Lubiane and her brother set out in the meantime for the court of Charlemagne, to obtain a grant of the county of Clermont, on pretence that the race of Miles is extinct. The ape, who at this time was on a visit to Richer, the old seneschal of Miles, having learned the step they were about to take, suggests to his host the propriety of writing to Charlemagne, to give him some insight into the character of the claimants. The ape charges himself with the letter, but from the badness of the roads, and want of relays, does not arrive at Paris till some days after the traitors. He makes his first appearance at court, though still in his travelling dress, during a great festival,

and signalizes his entrance by assaulting the countess Lubiane, rending her garments, and even committing outrages on her person. He then presents the letter to Charlemagne, who thinks the matter of sufficient importance to consult his peers. The difficulty is to find a champion to maintain the accusation : the ape, however, readily offers himself as the opponent to one of the relations of Lubiane, who stood forth as her defender. Defiances of this description, singular as they may appear, were not unknown in France about the period of the composition of this work. In Monfauçon (*Monumens de la Monarchie Française*, vol. iii. p. 68) there is an account of a combat which took place in 1371 between a greyhound and a knight, who had treacherously slain the dog's master. The animal attacked the assassin with such vehemence whenever they happened to be in company together, that suspicion was at length excited, and Charles the Wise appointed a solemn combat between the parties. The knight was provided with a club. The dog had only his natural arms, but was supplied with an open cask as a place of retreat; the just cause prevailed, the traitor was forced to confess his crime, and the memory of the event was preserved in a painting in the hall of the castle of Montargis. On the present occasion, too, the good

cause and our ape are triumphant. The champion of Lubiane is soon obliged to confess himself vanquished to save himself from being torn to pieces: according to the established customs he is hanged after the combat; and Lubiane is burned alive. The author of the romance informs us that the history of the ape, and particularly of this battle, were delineated in his time on the wall of the great hall of the palace of Paris; which was burned, I believe, in 1618.

While the ape was thus distinguishing himself at court, and preparing materials for future artists, Florizelle, the son of Miles, having followed his comrades the young lions, in the course of their field sports, as far as the Venetian territory, is caught by Gloriant, the Saracen king of that country, who delighted in the chase of wild beasts.

Anceaume, the other son of Miles, being detected in an intrigue with the daughter of the woodman, is driven from the house, and flies for refuge to a monastery in the neighbourhood. To this place Richer, the seneschal, attended by the ape, comes to pay his devotions. The animal, by the fineness of his nose, soon recognises his young master, and persuades the seneschal, to take him along with them.

He is accordingly introduced by the ape at the court of Charlemagne, and serves in an expedition undertaken by that prince against Venice. In that campaign Floriselle distinguishes himself on the side of the Saracens, and Anceaume on that of the Christians. Anceaume takes Gloriant, King of Venice, prisoner; and Floriselle overthrows and sends captive to Venice the bravest peers of Charlemagne. The two brothers, at length, are sent out against each other, and after a furious contest, being mutually tired, they sit down to rest. A negro slave brings refreshments to Floriselle, and the ape presents a collation to Anceaume. The singularity of their attendants becomes the subject of conversation, and leads the young warriors to recount to each other the story of the early part of their lives. From this mutual detail they conjecture that they are related, and their surmises are confirmed by the ape, who, with much sympathy, embraces them alternately. Floriselle proceeds with his brother to the camp of Charlemagne. The ape traces on the sand their early adventures in admirable hieroglyphicks, and afterwards dies with joy at seeing his young masters become powerful and renowned lords.

The romance of

JOURDAIN DE BLAVES,¹

printed at Paris in 4to without date, and Paris in folio, 1520, may, in one respect, be regarded as a continuation of Miles and Ames; Jourdain, the hero of the work, being the son of Girard of Blaves, who was one of the children of Ames. Jourdain came into the world with one of his legs white as snow, and the other black as ebony; one of his arms was of a rose, and the other of a citrine colour. A clerk explained that these personal peculiarities portended a chequered life, that at one time this party-coloured infant would be seated on a throne, that at another he would be poor and in captivity.

These predictions are verified by the event; for after various vicissitudes, Jourdain at length obtains a kingdom by espousing Driabelle, Princess of Gardes. During a voyage to France, which he undertook, to recover his paternal inheritance, Dri-

¹ Les faits et prouesses du noble et vaillant Chevalier Jourdain de Blaves lequel conquesta plusieurs Royaumes Barbares—les peines qu' il eut a obtenir l' amour de la belle Driabelle fille au fort Roi Richard de Gardes,

abelle, who was pregnant at the time, is one day believed dead while in a swoon, and thrown overboard in a cask.

After the lapse of some years, a suspicion strikes our hero that the princess had been prematurely thrown overboard. He sets out in quest of her, and after seven years search finds her residing with a hermit in a forest in the territory of Pisa. The wooden cask in which she had been enshrined was picked up on the shore, to which it had floated, by a miller in the neighbourhood, who received Driabelle in his house, but exposed the daughter to whom she shortly after gave birth. To avoid the love solicitations with which she was persecuted by her host, she had sought refuge with the recluse. Soon after this discovery, the king, while hunting, one day in the forest meets his daughter in company with two fawns, and a hind, by whom she had been kindly entreated when exposed by the miller. The queen identifies her by certain marks that had been observed after her birth; and as she was very beautiful, and of course well educated, she was betrothed to Sadoine, the Saracenic king of Scotland, whom Jourdain had recently converted, along with his people, to the true faith.

The romance of

DOOLIN DE MAYENCE

is supposed to have been written during the reign of Charles VIII. of France, that is, about the end of the fifteenth century. This conclusion is drawn partly from the language of the work—partly from the character and actions assigned to Charlemagne. The romancers who wrote a few centuries after his death did justice to his talents and virtues, but their successors have painted him as an unreasonable monarch, and sometimes even as a cowardly knight. At whatever period it was written, it was first published in 1501 at Paris, by Verard. This edition was followed by a second in 1540, 4to, from the same place, and a third at Lyons, 1604.

Doolin of Mayence, the hero of this romance, was the son of Guyon of Mayence, who, while engaged in the chase, had the misfortune to run down a hermit in mistake for a stag. As a suitable penance, he occupied the cell of the deceased for the remainder of his days; and his son Doolin, who was his sole companion, was bred up at the hermitage. When he attained the proper age he performed the accustomed exploits of chivalry.

His most important achievement was the conquest of Denmark, which he subdued after an eight years' war, and transmitted the crown to his posterity.

The romance of Doolin is by no means interesting, and its hero is chiefly remarkable as the ancestor of a long race of paladins, particularly Ogier the Dane, so frequently mentioned by the Italian poets.

The fabulous history of

OGIER LE DANOIS,²

though not printed till about the same period with that of Doolin, was written at a much earlier date, or, at least, the incidents were earlier imagined. They were probably first communicated to the French nation by the Norman invaders, and were embodied in a number of metrical romances written in the reign of Philip the Hardy, or Philip the Fair. The longest of these is attributed to Adenes, herald to the Duke of Brabant. The infamous and traitrous character assigned in the prose romance to the knights templar, makes it proba-

² Romans du preux et vaillant Chevalier Ogier le Danois, Duc de Danemarck, &c.

ble that it was written in the time of Philip the Fair, in whose reign the order was suppressed, on account of real or alleged enormities.

Doon of Mayence had by his wife, Flandrina, a son called Geoffrey, who succeeded to him in the kingdom of Denmark, and Ogier the Dane was son to this monarch.

The fairies, who only act a part in the more recent romances of the Round Table, appear in the earliest tales relating to Charlemagne. Not fewer than six of these intermeddling beings presided at the birth of Ogier. Five of the number bestowed on him the most precious gifts and accomplishments, while Morgane, the sister of Arthur, who was the sixth, decreed, that when Ogier had passed a long life of glory, he should come to her palace of Avalen in his old age, and, laying his laurels at her feet, partake with her the enjoyments of love in the finest residence in the universe.

Some disputes having arisen between the king of Denmark and Charlemagne, Ogier, who was now ten years of age, was, at the adjustment of differences, sent as an hostage to Paris, where he was instructed in all the accomplishments of the time. At the end of four years, Charlemagne, irritated by some new transgression of the king of Denmark, banished Ogier to the castle of St Omer.

There his confinement and exile are soothed by the kindness of the governor, and still more sweetly solaced by the attention of his daughter, the beautiful Bellissande. Ogier seems to have been on no occasion disposed to abide the amorous old age reserved him by the decree of the fairies; but he is unfortunately withdrawn from a residence which love had begun to render delightful, and summoned to attend Charlemagne to Italy, on an expedition against the Saracens. In the romance there is a long, but not very interesting account of the services he performed for Charlemagne, and his narrow escapes from the plots of Charlot, Charlemagne's unworthy son, who was envious of his renown. The emperor having at length triumphed over all his enemies, and re-established Leo in the pontifical throne, returned to France, accompanied by Ogier.

The first intelligence the Danish hero learned on his arrival, was, that Bellissande had made him the father of a son, and the next, that he had succeeded to the crown of Denmark by the demise of his parents. He took immediate possession of the sovereignty, but after a reign of some years he resigned it, and returned to France.

Meanwhile the son of Ogier and Bellissande had grown up, and was a deserved favourite at the

court of Charlemagne. One day, having unfortunately vanquished Charlot at a game of chess, that prince, who was not remarkable for his forbearance, struck him dead with the chess board. The exasperated father of the victim insulted his sovereign so grossly in consequence of this outrage, that he was forced to fly into Lombardy. Didier, king of that country, was then at war with Charlemagne; but, spite of the assistance of Ogier, he is worsted by the French monarch. The Danish hero escaped from a castle in which he was besieged, but while asleep by the side of a fountain, he was taken captive by Archbishop Turpin. Ogier refused to be reconciled to his sovereign, unless the guilty Charlot was delivered up to his vengeance. These conditions were complied with, but when Ogier was about to strike off the head of the prince, his arm was arrested by the voice of an angel, commanding him to spare the son of Charlemagne.

After this interposition, Ogier returned to his obedience, and was soon after employed to combat a Saracen giant, who had landed with a great army in France, but was defeated and slain according to the final lot of all pagans and giants. Ogier received as a reward the hand of the princess Clarice of England. This lady had followed her father to France, who came there to do homage

for his crown. She had been intercepted, however, and detained by the pagans, from whom she was rescued by the exertions of Ogier, who, soon after his union, passed over to England, and in right of his wife, was there acknowledged as king: but, tired of the enjoyment of an empire which had been so easily gained, he soon after set out in quest of new adventures, the account of which forms the second part of the romance.

Of this division of the work, a considerable portion is occupied with the wars in Palestine. Our adventurer successively seized on Acres, Jerusalem, and Babylon, of which cities he was declared king, but resigned them in turn to his kinsmen, who had accompanied him on his expedition, and anew set sail for France. For some time he enjoyed a favourable breeze, but at length his vessel was driven by a tempest on a rock, to which it was immoveably fixed. In proportion as provisions failed, the sailors were in turn thrown overboard. When all his crew had been thus disposed of, Ogier landed and directed his steps to a castle of Adamant, which, though invisible during day, shone by night with miraculous splendour. His first entrance into this mansion has a striking resemblance to a description in the romance of Partenopex: every thing is magnifi-

cently arranged, but no person appears. At length, having entered a saloon, he perceived a repast prepared, and a horse seated at table, who, on the approach of Ogier, instantly rose, presented him with water, and then returned to his chair. The hospitable quadruped next made signs to his guest to partake of the viands, but Ogier, little accustomed to fellowship with such hosts, and scarce comprehending his imperfect gesticulation, left the whole repast for behoof of the landlord, who, after a plentiful supper, conducted the stranger to a magnificent chamber prepared for his repose. Next morning Ogier went abroad, and followed a path which conducted him to a delightful meadow. 'Welcome,' said the fairy Morgana, who now appeared richly attired, amidst an assemblage of beautiful nymphs—'welcome to the palace of Avalon, where you have been so long expected.' She then re-conducted him to the palace of adamant, but the reader hears no more of the horse, nor any satisfactory reason why he was preferred to the office of *croupier*, and selected to do the honours of the castle, for which he must have been but indifferently qualified, either by his dexterity in carving, or his talents for conversation.

On his arrival at the palace, Morgana placed a

ring on the hand of Ogier, who, though at that time upwards of a hundred years of age, immediately assumed the appearance of a youth of thirty. She afterwards fixed on his brow a golden crown, adorned with precious stones, which formed leaves of myrtle and of laurel. From this moment the court of Charlemagne and its glories were effaced from his recollection—the thrones of Denmark and Palestine vanished from his view—Morgana was now the sole object of his devotion. The delights of her garden and palace were ever varied by magic; and, as described in the romance, remind us of the illusions of Alcina. The fairy also introduced her lover to the acquaintance of her brother Arthur, who had resided with her for the last four hundred years. Oberon too, another brother of Morgana, frequently came to visit his sister, and placed at her disposal a troop of spirits, who assumed a variety of forms, appearing, in the shape of Lancelot, Tristan, or some other knight of the Round Table, as if to consult their sovereign on the interpretation of the laws of that celebrated institution, and to discourse with him on their former exploits. Sometimes they took the figures of giants and monsters, and came to attack the pavilion of the monarch. Ogier and the Bri-

tish king were delighted with each other's society, and were frequently engaged in joust and tournament with these imaginary foes.¹

Two hundred years having elapsed in these amusements, the moment arrived at which Ogier was destined to be separated for a short while from his mistress. The crown of forgetfulness having been removed from his brow, the glories of his former life burst on his memory, and he suddenly departed for the court of France, where he was destined to revive, under the first of the Capets, that spirit of chivalry which had sunk under the feeble successors of Charlemagne. The romance describes, in a way amusing enough, the astonishment of the courtiers at the appearance of this celebrated hero, and his reciprocal surprise at the change that had taken place in manners and customs. France, and even Paris, were at this time threatened by the northern nations who had settled in Normandy. Ogier was appointed to command an expedition against them; and by restoring the genuine spirit of chivalry in his army, entirely defeated the enemy. After his return he assisted at the meetings of the councils; and, in the

¹ See Appendix, No. XVI.

course of a twelvemonth, revived throughout the kingdom the vigour of the age of Charlemagne.

As Ogier still bore the ring he had received from Morgana, which gave him the appearance of unfaded youth, he was highly favoured by the ladies of the court. The secret, however, had nearly transpired by means of the old countess of Senlis, who, while making love to Ogier, drew this talisman from his hand and placed it on her own. She instantly blossomed into youth, while Ogier shrunk into decrepitude. The countess was forced to give back the ring, and former appearances were restored; but, as she had discovered its value, she employed thirty champions to regain it, all of whom were successively defeated by the knight.

The king of France having died about this time, the queen wisely resolved to espouse a hero, who, with the bloom and vigour of thirty, possessed the experience of three centuries: but when the ceremony was about to be performed, he was suddenly carried away by Morgana, and, to the misfortune of chivalry, has never since been heard of. The fairies of romance are much in the habit of conveying away mortals who possess the qualities that engage their affections. In the Arabian tales, Ahmed, son of the sultan of the Indies, is carri-

ed to the castle of the fairy Pari Banou, who was enamoured of him; and in the fabliau of Lanval, the knight of that name was brought, like Ogier, to Avallon, whence he never returned.

The romance of Ogier is certainly one of the most interesting of the class to which it belongs, and has accordingly gone through a great number of editions, of which the earliest was at Paris, in folio, by Verard, and the next at Lyons in 1525.

The hero of this popular romance has been the subject of two romantic poems in Italy, *Il Danese Uggieri*, and *La Morte del Danese*. He is also frequently mentioned by Ariosto and Boiardo. Pulci, in his *Morgante Maggiore*, alludes in a jocular manner to the fiction of his long-protracted existence :—

“ E del Danese che ancor vivo sia
Dicono alcun, (ma non la Istoria mia),
E che si truova in certa grotta oscura,
E spesso armato a caval par che stia,
Si che chi il vede gli mette paura.”

Morg. Mag. c. 28.

There exists a romance which gives an account of the exploits of the son of Ogier and Morgane, called Meurvin, from whom the celebrated Godfrey of Bouillon is feigned to have been descended. This work has gone through a good many editions, but is totally uninteresting.

It has already been mentioned, that Ogier the Dane was grandson of Doolin of Mayence. Doolin appears to have been the patriarch of chivalry; for, besides his eldest son Geoffrey, the father of Ogier, he had a child of his own name, who inherited the country of Mayence, and was the ancestor of Gan, who acts so villainous a part in the Italian poems. A third son of Doolin was Beuves, count of Aigremont, who was the father of Vivian, and the Christian enchanter Maugis (the Malgigi of Ariosto). Aymon, count of Dordogne, the fourth son of Doolin, gave birth to a posterity still more illustrious, being father of Renaud de Montauban and his three brothers, whose names suggest every thing that is splendid and romantic in poetry or fiction.

There are different French romances, both in prose and verse, concerning the adventures of Maugis, and the exploits of the four sons of Aymon. In these the same circumstances are frequently repeated, which renders a separate analysis of each superfluous.

The romances relating to Maugis, and his brother Vivian, derive considerable interest from the novelty of the character of the hero, and the singular enchantments he employs. We are told that he passed his infancy in the palace of the fairy

Glorianda, by whom he was initiated into that art, which he afterwards so successfully practised : he completed his studies at the necromantic university of Toledo, and, according to some accounts, held the professor's chair of magic in that city, which was distinguished as a school for the mysteries of the black art,

“ Questa città di Tolletto solean,
Tenere studie di Negromanzia,
Quivi di Magica arte si leggea
Pubblicamente, e di Peromanzia ;
E molti Geomanti sempre avea
E sperimenti assai de Tetremanzia.”

Morg. Mag. c. 25. .

Maugis, however, did not confine himself to the theory of magic. By his knowledge in that art he subdued the horse Bayardo ; an exploit attributed by Tasso to Rinaldo. This unruly steed inhabited a cavern, which was guarded by a horrible dragon, and was in the vicinity of a volcano, which formed one of the principal mouths of hell. The enchanter afterwards assisted Marsirius, king of Spain, in his wars with the Amiral of Persia, and availed himself of his incantations to forward and conceal his own intrigue with the queen. He also

aided Arnaud of Montcler in his contest with Charlemagne, deceiving the enemy by fascinating their eyes, or entering the hostile camp in various disguises, after the manner of Merlin.

Maugis continues to act a distinguished part in the romances concerning the four sons of Aymon, of which the principal is that of Renaud de Montauban, taken from a metrical tale written by Huon de Villeneuve, as far back as the thirteenth century. In these works there is a detail of the events of a war carried on by Charlemagne against the four brothers, in revenge for the loss of his nephew, who had been killed by Rinaldo; in the course of this contest, Maugis renders, by his usual arts, the most powerful assistance to his rebellious kinsmen. There is also an account of the reiterated treasons of Gano, and the victories Rinaldo gains over the Saracen invaders of the dominions of Yvon, king of Gascony, who bestows on his champion the castle of Montauban, and his sister Clarice, which, it will be recollected, is the name of the heroine in the Rinaldo of Tasso. At length this celebrated paladin retired to a hermitage; but, for the sake of occasional exercise, hired himself out as a mason. His piety drew on him the hatred of his fellow-labourers, and one day while he was praying at the bottom of the wall of a church which they

were building, they threw on his head an enormous stone, which slew him before he had completed his devotions.

The concluding scenes of the life of Maugis are exhibited in the chronicle of Mabrian: Like his cousin Rinaldo, this enchanter had retired to a hermitage; he emerges, however, from this seclusion, and repairs to Rome, where he attracts so much notice by his eloquence and the sanctity of his manners, that, on the death of Leo, he is raised to the pontifical chair. He soon, however, abdicates his new-acquired dignity, and again betakes himself to the hermitage. About this time, Richardette, the youngest brother of Rinaldo, was assassinated by the treachery of Gano. Alard and Guichard, his two surviving brothers, suspecting that the crime had been committed by the command, or the connivance of Charlemagne, publicly insult their sovereign, and after this imprudence fly for refuge to the hermitage of Maugis. The emperor having discovered the place of their retreat, kindled faggots at the entrance of the cavern, and smoked the heroes to death.

There also exists a French romance, entitled *Morgant le Geant*, the incidents of which correspond precisely with those of the *Morgante Maggiore* of Pulci. It is probable, however, that the

romance was translated from the poem, as it was not customary with the Italians to versify so closely the lying productions of preceding fablers.*

* With the class of romances relating to Charlemagne, we may range the well-known story of *Valentine and Orson*, which was written during the reign of Charles VIII., and was first printed in 1495, at Lyons, in folio.

There are a few romances of chivalry relating to French knights, which cannot properly be classed among those connected with Charlemagne and his paladins. Of these, the only one worth mentioning, is *Le Petit Jehan de Saintré*, which was composed in the middle of the fifteenth century, by Anthony de la Sale, a Burgundian author, and printed in 1517 and 1723. Trepan says that this work gives a great deal of insight into the manners of the age, and the customs of the French court; in short, that it may be considered as the most national of all the French romances. "I have not seen," says Warton, "any French romance which has preserved the practices of chivalry more copiously than *Saintré*. It must have been an absolute masterpiece for the rules of tilting, martial customs, and public ceremonies, prevailing in the author's age."—(*Warton's Hist. of Eng. Poet.* vol. i. p. 334.)

Baudouin, count of Flanders, is the hero of another romance, which may here be mentioned; he is represented as endowed with such an excessive pride, that he refused the daughter of the king of France in marriage. One day, while hunting in a forest, he met a lady of majestic stature arrayed in magnificent attire, who accosted him, and declared that she was the heiress of a splendid throne in Asia; but that she had fled from the court of her father, to avoid a marriage that was disagreeable to her. The count, incited by

The romances of the second class, or those which relate to Charlemagne, so closely resemble the fictions concerning Arthur and the knights of the Round Table, that the same, or nearly the

love and ambition, espoused and carried her to the French court. When a year had elapsed, the Asiatic princess brought him two beautiful daughters; yet Baudouin, though in the enjoyment of great domestic felicity, awaited with much impatience the return of a courier he had despatched to the dominions of his royal father. Meanwhile a hermit having obtained admittance to the presence of the count, expressed his doubts as to the existence of this Asiatic empire, and concluded with begging leave to dine in company with the princess. The request being complied with, when the rest of the company are seated at table, the hermit enters the apartment, and, without exordium, commands the landlady to return to the bell whence she had originally issued. This mode of address, which unfortunately none of the count's guests had hitherto thought of employing at his board, has the desired effect on the hostess, who vanishes with hideous yells, but not without doing irreparable damage both to the dwelling and the dinner.

The fact is, that Baudouin, as a punishment for his pride, had been unwittingly married to the devil. The remainder of the romance is occupied with a crusade, performed by the husband as an expiation for this unfortunate connection, and with the adventures of his two daughters, who turn out better disposed than could have been anticipated from their diabolical descent.

Unions of the description formed in this romance, were not only common fictions, but were credited by the vulgar.

same observations apply to both. The foundations of each are laid from supposed histories; Arthur wars against the Saxons, and Charlemagne against the Saracens; both are unhappy in their families, and sometimes unsuccessful in their undertakings. In each class of compositions the characters of these sovereigns are degraded below their historical level, for the purpose of giving greater dignity and relief to their paladins and chivalry; since, if this had not been done, the monarchs would have been the only heroes, and the different warriors would not have appeared in their proper light. But by lowering, as it were, the sovereign princes, the writers of romance delineated the manners of their times, and pleased, perhaps, those haughty barons who took delight in representations of vassals, superior in prowess and in power to their lords. The authors of the romances concerning Charlemagne, wrote under considerable disadvantages: The ground had been already occupied by their predecessors, and they could do little more than copy their pictures of tented fields, and their

It was at one time generally believed that an ancestor of Geoffrey of Plantagenet had espoused a demon, and from this alliance Fordun accounts for the profligacy of King John. Andrew of Wyntown, in his *Orygynale Cronykil* of Scotland, attributes a similar origin to Macbeth.

method of dissecting knights and giants. On the other hand, circumstances were in some degree more favourable to them than to the authors of the fictions concerning Arthur and the companions of the Round Table. The Saracens were a more romantic people than the Saxons; and the tales of eastern fairies and eastern magnificence offered new pictures to delight and astonish the mind. These, indeed, are much less agreeable than genuine pictures of life and nature; but they are better, at least, than descriptions of continual havoc, and of the unprovoked slaughter of giants.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No I.—p. 10.

JAMBlichus

WAS born of Syrian parents. In his youth he was placed under the care of a learned Babylonian, who instructed him in the manners and customs of his country, and particularly in its language, which by this time must have been somewhat simplified. His Babylonish preceptor, however, was taken prisoner, and sold as a slave at the time of Trajan's Syrian conquest. After this Jamblichus applied himself chiefly to Greek literature, but he informs us that he did not forget his magic, for, when Antoninus sent his colleague Verus against Vologesus, king of the Parthians, he predicted the progress and issue of that contest.

Photius has given a pretty full account of the Sinon and Rhodanes of Jamblichus, in his *Myriabilia*. A MS. of the romance was formerly extant in the library of the Escurial, which was burned in 1671. Another copy was

in possession of Jungerman, who died in the beginning of the seventeenth century, but it has since disappeared. Some fragments originally transcribed by Vossius, from the Florentine library, were published in 1641, by Leo Allatius, in his excerpts from the Greek Rhetoricians (*Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*, vol. xxxiv. p. 57).

Jamblichus, the author of this romance, must not be confounded with either of the Platonic philosophers of that name, both of whom lived in the reign of the Emperor Julian, and were great favourites of the Apostata.

No. II.—p. 14.

HELIODORUS,

towards the close of his romance, informs us, that he was of the race of the sun, and indeed his name seems expressive of some alliance with that luminary. Though of this high mythological extraction, he accepted of the bishopric of Tricca, in Thessaly, under the Christian emperors Arcadius and Honorius, who reigned in the beginning of the fifth century. It has been said, that a synod having given him the choice either to burn his romance, or renounce his bishopric, the author preferred the latter alternative. This deposition, however, seems nearly as questionable as the solar origin of the family of Heliodorus.

The earliest Greek impression of the *Æthiopics* was edited at Basil, in 1543, in 4to, by Vincent Obsequius.

who purchased the MS. from a soldier who had pillaged the library of Matthias Corvinus at Buda. The romance soon after appeared in almost all the modern languages of Europe. The whole work was turned into English prose by Thomas Underdown, and printed 1577; part of it was also versified in English hexameters, by Abraham Fraunce, and published in this form, 1591, 8vo. There have been at least four French translations, the earliest of which was by Amyot, whose version is said to have so pleased Francis I., that he presented him to the abbacy of Bellozane. Strange that ecclesiastical preferment should have been obtained by the translation of a work, of which the original composition is said to have cost its author deposition from a bishopric!

Theagenes and Chariclea soon became a favourite work in France. We are told in particular, that the preceptor of a monastery, at which Racine was educated, having found his pupil engaged in its perusal, took the book from him. The young poet having procured another copy, was again detected at the same employment by his pedagogue, whom he now told that he was welcome to burn it, as he had got the whole by heart.

No. III.—p. 33.

ACHILLES TATIUS

is supposed by some to have lived in the fourth century,

but Boden thinks he must have been later, because, in some of his descriptions he has obviously imitated the poet Musaeus, whom he thinks posterior to that time. He was a rhetorician, and is said to have composed various treatises connected with astronomy and history. There is an epigram in praise of him, particularly of the chastity of his romance, by the emperor Leo Philosophus. The lines have also been attributed to Photius, but it is not probable he was the author, if we consider the opinion he gives of the work of Tatius in his *Myriabibla*. Hieronymus Commelinus first undertook an edition of this romance; but, as he died before it was completed, it was published by his nephews in 1601. About forty years afterwards, a more perfect edition was given by Salmasius, at Leyden, and the work was illustrated by a number of notes, which have been generally added to the more recent impressions, of which the last was in 1776. Clitophon and Leucippe was translated into French by the Abbe Desfontaines. There is also a German version by Seybold, with a criticism prefixed, and an English one printed at Oxford in the seventeenth century.

No. IV.—p. 44.

LONGUS.

It seems to be very uncertain who **LONGUS** was, or at what time he lived. Photius says nothing of him in his

Myristicis, nor is he mentioned by any of the authors with whom he is supposed to have been contemporary. It has been conjectured, however, that he was born at Lesbos, and, it is supposed from his style, that he did not live later than the fourth or fifth century. But, in fact, that is a very uncertain mode of coming to any result, for I cannot see why by an assiduous study of the ancient Greek authors, he might not have written as purely in the tenth as in the fifth century. The writers who lived during the latter ages of the Greek empire, particularly the Sophists, (an appellation generally added to the name of Longus), applied themselves to some ancient writer, as Plato, Demosthenes, &c., whose style they tried to emulate, and to this imitation alone they trusted for excellence. The first Greek edition of the pastoral of Longus was by Columbanus, Florence, 1598. The editor informs us, it was printed from a MS. which he procured from the library of Aloisius Alamannius, and which was compared by one of the editor's friends, Fulvius Ursinus, with a MS. at Rome, and the various readings transmitted to him. This impression was followed by the edition of Jungerman, and a great variety of others, most of which have been made use of in his late edition, by Villoison, who boasts in his preface that he had studied Greek twelve hours daily from his infancy. Previous to any Greek editions, Gambara translated this pastoral romance from the MS. into Latin verse, and this work was printed 1569. In 1559 it was translated by Amyot, and of his version there have been a great number of editions, one of which was published with figures designed by the regent duke of Orleans.

No. V.—P. 63.

CHARITON APHRODISIENSIS

is as little known as the other writers of Greek romance. Indeed, it has been suspected by some, that his graceful name is entirely fictitious; by others it has been conjectured that he was born at Aphrodisia, a city in Caria, and it is supposed, from the imperfection of his style, that the author, whoever he was, existed posterior to the age of Heliodorus or Tatius. His romance was published at Amsterdam, 1750, by D'Orville, from a copy, taken by his friend Antonio Cocchi, of a MS. found in a monastery at Florence. The Latin translation by Reiskius, is executed with uncommon spirit and fidelity. The romance itself consists of 144 pages, and the notes added by D'Orville, occupy 788. "Charitonis contextum," says he, "*pæcis ubi opus videbatur illustrandum duxi.*" The trouble the commentator has taken is the more extraordinary, as he seems to have entertained but an indifferent opinion of the merit of the romance, "*et vere dicere licet, Charitonem potius insignibus vitiis carere, quam magnis virtutibus esse commendabilem.*" In 1752, there appeared an Italian translation, through the medium of which the English one has been formed.

No. VI.—p. 70.

JOANNES DAMASCENUS

was born in the seventh or eighth century, in Syria, and his spiritual romance is said to have been originally written in the language of that country, but it was translated into Greek at an early period. His youth was spent in the service of a Mahometan calif, but he afterwards retired into the monastery of St Sabas, in Syria, where he became a monk, and died at the age of eighty-four. Besides his Lives of Josaphat and Barlaam, he is the author of many theological and controversial writings, particularly several works in favour of images against the Iconoclastes, which subjected him to much persecution. His hand, indeed, was cut off on account of the tenets he professed, but was afterwards miraculously restored to him by the Virgin.

Little is known with regard to the remaining writers of Greek romance. EUSTATHIUS, the author of *Ismene* and *Imenias*, is called *Eumathias* in the manuscripts of that production; and it has been suspected that Gualminus, who published and translated the work, adopted the name of Eustathius, in order to make the public believe that the romance was written by the commentator on Homer of that name. Gualminus was also editor of the

Dosicles and Rhodantes of Theodorus Prodromus, who, as he informs us, was originally from Russia, but became, soon after his arrival in Greece, a priest, a physician, and a philosopher.

Nº VII.—p. 172.

MERLIN.

Quand les Chevaliers et Dames et Damoyelles, furent arrivez, Dieu sait la joye que le Roy leur fist, et s'en vint a Yguerne et a son Mari, et les fist menager en sa table, et fist seoir le Duc de costè lui. Et fist tant le Roy par ses paroles que Yguerne ne se peut defendre qu' elle ne print de ses joyaulx, tant qu' elle sceut bien, de vrai, que le Roy l'aimoit, et apres que la feste fut passée, chacun se en voulut retourner, et prièrent congé du Roy. Et le Roy leur pria qu' ils revinssent tousjours, ainsi qu' il leur avoit commandé, si luy accorderent chacun. Si endura le Roy cette peine d' amours jusques a long-temps. Si ne peut plus endurer ce martyre, et luy convint se descouvrir a deux des plus privéz de son conseil, et leur dit l'angoisse qu' il souffroit pour l' amour d' Yguerne.—Et quant le jour de la feste fut venu, chacun se trouva a Cardenill avecques leurs appareils, tant Dames et Damoyelles, de quoy le Roy fut moult joyeux, et quant le Roy sceut que chacune fut arrivé, et le Duc de Tintail, et sa femme Yguerne, si

prist sa couronne, et se presenta devant tous les Barons
 auxquels il donna plusieurs riches joyaux, et ans dames
 et Damoyelles aussi. Et quant se vint a la table, que
 chacun fut assis pour manger, le Roy fut moult joyeux
 et lyer. Si parla a ung sien conseiller, auquel il se fioit,
 qui fut nomme Ullius. Et lui dist que l'amour d'Ygu-
 erne le taillit, et le feroit mourir, et qu'il ne pouoit du-
 rer. Il ne le veoit, et que quant il en perdroit la vue, le
 cuer lui meurdassoit, et que a il n'avoit remede d'elle,
 qu'il ne pövoit longuement vivre. Et Ullius lui re-
 spondit: Sire, coudriez vous bien mourir pour l'amour
 d'une dame? Sachez, que Je ne suis que ung pövre
 Gentilhomme; mais Je ne couderois point mourir pour
 l'amour d'une femme. Car Je ne oty parler de femme
 (pourveu qu'elle fust bien requise) qui, pour ce qu'on
 luy presente plusieurs dons, ne se consentye a la volente
 de celui qui la requiert. Et toy qui es Roy, te esbahis
 tu comme tu pourras avoir l'amour d'une dame! Il sem-
 ble que tu ayes le cuer bien couart qui n'oses requir-
 rir une dame d'aymer. Et le Roy luy dist: tu ditz
 vrai, tu sces qu'il convient a telle chose. Si te prie que
 tu m'aydes en toutes les manieres que tu pourras. Si
 prens en mon tresor, ce que tu voudras pour lui donner,
 et a ceulx et a celles qui sont autour d'elle; et pense de
 faire a chacun son plaisir, et va parler a Yguerne. Et
 Ullius respondit: Je saüray bien faire ce que m'avez
 commande. Ainsi tint la court huit jours en grant joye,
 et avoit le Roy toujours a sa compaignie, et lui donna
 de moult riches joyaux; et a ses compaignons aussi. Et
 Ullius ben alla parler a Yguerne, et luy dist ce qu'il
 convenoit a parler d'amours, et luy porta plusieurs
 beaux joyaux, et riches. Et jamais Yguerne n'en

voulut riens ; tant quil advint ung jour que Yguerne tira Ulsius a conseil a une part, et luy dist.—Ulsius pourquoi me offres tu tant de si beaulx jouyaux ? Et Ulsius respondit ; pour le grant sens et belle contenance que Je voy en vous, votre grant beaulté. Et saiehez que tout l' avoir de ce Royaume est a vous ; et tous les gens aussi sont a faire votre plaisir et votre volente. Et elle respondit : comment sais tu ce ? Et il respondit : Dame vous avez le cuer de celui a qui est le Royaume. Et elle dist ; qui est le cuer ? C'est le cuer du Roy, dist il. Comment ? dist elle ; le Roy a le cuer bien felon et bien traître de monstrier a monseigneur si grant semblant qu' il l' aime, si il me veult trahir et deshonnorer ; Je te diray, Ulsius, gardes sur ta vie que jamais tu ne me parles de tieulx parolles, que bien saiches que Je le dirois au Duc, et s' il le scavoit, il te conviendroit mourir. Ne ja ne le celeray que ceste foys. Et Ulsius respondit ; se Je mouroye pour le Roy, se me seroit grant honneur. Puis il lui dit : Dame Je me esbahis que vous refusez le Roy pour votre amy, qui plus vous aime que luy meme ; et veuillez savoir qu' il meurt pour vous, et qu' il mourra si n' avez mercy de luy. Et elle respondit : vous vous gabez. Et il luy respondit : Pour Dieu, Dame, ayez mercy du Roy et de vous-mesmes ; car si vous n' en avez mercy, vous en verrez venir grant mal. Ne vous, ne votre seigneur, ne vous saurez deffendre contre sa volente. Et a donc Yguerne respondit en pleurant tendrement : Si feray ; Je m' en deffendrai bien. Car jamais ne me trouveray, la feste passée, en la compagnie du Roy, ny en sa cour ne me trouveray ; ne pour quelque mandement qu'il face ne viendray. Ainsi se departirent Ulsius et Yguerne.

No. VIII.—p. 192.

PERCEVAL.

Premierement, dist la mere de Perceval, si vous trouves, ne pres, ne loin, Dame qui ait de vous besoing, ou pucelle desconseillé, ou qui de votre ayde ait metier, ne lui venillez denier votre service. Car Je vous dy que tout honneur est a l' homme perdu, qui honneur a dame ne porte ; et quiconque honoré veut etre, lui faut a pucelle et a Dame honneur referer. Ung autre enseignement retiendrez : S' il echiet que pucelle ayez gagnée, ou que pucelle de vous soit amie privée, si le baiser elle ne vous denie, le baiser pouvez prendre ; mais le reste, Je vous le deffens : fors que si en doigt elle a anneau, ou aumoniere a sa ceinture, si, par amour, anneau ou aumoniere vous donne, licitement le don vous pouvez, en la remerciant, prendre, et le don d'icelle emporter. Perceval prit congé de sa mere, et s' achemina vers la cour du Roy Artus. Le Lendemain aux premiers rayons du Soleil il decouvrit un riche pavillon.

Quant pres du pavillon fut arrivé, ouvert le trouva, dedans lequel vit un lict noblement accoutré, sur lequel estoit une pucelle seule endormie, laquelle avoient laissée ses demoyselles qui estoient allé cueiller des fleurs pour le pavillon folier et parier, comme de ce faire estoient accoutumées. Lors est Perceval du lict de la Pucelle appro-

ché, courant assez lourdement dessus son cheval : adonc s'est la pucelle assez effrayement éveillée. A laquelle, dit Perceval, "Pucelle, Je vous salue, comme ma mere m'a appris, laquelle m'a commandé que jamais pucelle ne trouvasse, que humblement ne la saluasse." Aux paroles du jeune Perceval, se print la pucelle a trembler, car bien luy sembloit qu'il n'estoit gueres sage; comme le monstroït assez son parler : et bien se reputoit folle, que ainsi seule l'avoit trouvée endormie. Puis elle lui dit : "Amy pense bien-tot d'icy te departir, de peur que mes amis ne t'y trouvent, car si icy te rancointaient, il t'en pourroit mal advenir." "Par ma foi," dit Perceval, "jamais d'icy ne partirai que, premier, baisée ne nous aye." A quoy repond la pucelle, que non-fasse, mais que bien-tot pense de departir, que ces amis là ne le trouvent. "Pucelle (fait Perceval) pour votre parler, d'icy ne partirai tant que de vous aye eu ung baiser; car ma mere m'a à ce faire ainsi enseigné." Tant s'est Perceval de la Pucelle approché, qu'il l'a par force baisée; car parvoir n'eut elle d'y resister, combien qu'elle se deffendit bien. Mais tant estoit lors Perceval leste et lourd, que la defense d'icelle ne luy put profiter, qu'il ne luy prit baiser, vouloit elle ou non, voire, comme dit le conte, plus de vingt fois. Apras que Perceval eut par force pris de la pucelle baiser, advisa qu'en son doigt elle avoit ung anneau d'or, dedans lequel estoit une belle claire et mouteuse enchaissée, lequel pareillement par force lui prit comme le baiser avoit eu : puis le mit en son doigt, entre le gré de la pucelle, qui fort s'estoit defendue quand cet anneau luy a esté. Lors Perceval prenant l'anneau de la Pucelle, usa de telles paroles, comme il avoit fait, au baiser, disant que sa mere l'avoit à ce faire enseigné.

mais que plus avant ne ailleurs ne toucheroit, comme par sa mere luy avoit esté commandé. La pucelle se voyant ainsi despouillée et ~~parfaite~~ de son anneau et de son baiser, se print si fort a lamenter et gemir, que le cuer luy cuida partir. Puis dit a Perceval : Amy, Je te prie, n' emporte point ~~mon anneau~~ ; car par trop en serois blamée, et toy, possible, en perdrais la vie. Perceval ne prend a cuer ce que la pucelle luy dit ; mais comme depuis qu' il fut de chez sa mere parti, n' avoit mangé ~~ne bu, par quoy ne fut au peillon de la pucelle sans grand appetit.~~ Et luy, en ce desir de manger, comme tant affamé, advise d' aventure un boucal plein de vin, ~~apres lequel estoit un hanap d' argent.~~ Puis regarde une touille, fort blanche et assez fine, qu' il souleve et prend ; et dessous icelle trouve trois patés fins, de chair de Chevreuil. Gueres n' atreva quand les patés en sa main tint, de se mettre a dechoir d' en taster ; car, comme si dit grand faim avoit. Partant, si-tot qu' il les tint, en froissa un entre ses mains, et apres en avoit mangé non seulement, souvant retournoit visiter le boucal. Puis dit a la pucelle : Dame, Je vous prie, venez et faites comme moy ; quand vous aurez ung paté mangé, et moy ung autre ; encore en restera-t-il ung pour les servans. La Pucelle voyant Perceval ainsi doreglement manger, s' en esbahit, et rien ne luy repond ; mais d' autre chose ne se peut allegier fors que de se prendre a pleurer et a gemir tendrement. Perceval, qui peu garde y prenoit, de la pucelle print coage, apres qu' il eut recouvert le reste des patés dessous la touille.

No. IX.—p. 308.

LANCELOT DU LAC.

Et quelle part cuydez vous aller beau Sire, dit Girflet. Le ne vous diray Je pas, dist le Roy, car Je ne puis : et quant Girflet veit qu' il n' en scauroit plus il se partit tantost du Roy Artus ; et si-tost comme il fut departy commença une pluye a cheoir grande et merueilleuse qui lui dura jusques a ung tertre qui estoit loing du Roy environ deuy lieus ; et pais quant il fat venu au dit tertre il descendit, et s' arresta dessous ung arbre tant que la pluye fust passée, et commença a regarder celle part ou il avoit laissé le Roy ; si veit venir parmy la mer une Nef qui estoit toute plaine de dames et de damoyelles, et quant elles vindrent a la rive la dame d' elles qui estoit Seur au Roy Artus l' appella, et sitost que le Roy Artus veit Morgain sa seur il se leva incontinent, et Morgain le print par la main et luy dist qu' il entrast dedans la nef ; si priat son cheval et ses armes et entra dedans la nef.

Et quant Girflet qui estoit au tertre eut veu comment le Roy estoit entré en la nef avecques les dames il retourna vers la rivièrre tant qu' il peut du cheval courre : et quant il y fut revenu il veit le Roy Artus entre les dames. Si congneut bien Morgain la Face car plusieurs foyz l' avoit veue. Et la nef si estoit ja plus eslongnée que une arbalestre neust sceu tirer a deux foyz.

No. X.—p. 217.

MELIADUS DE LEONNOYS.

Brehus encontra ung Chevalier armé de toutes pieces, qui menoit en sa compagnie une damoyselle et deux escuyers tant seullement. Et sachez que la damoyselle estoit bien vestue, et moult noblement, comme ce feust este une Roïne; et estoit montée sus ung palfrey blanc, et chevauchoit plaisamment parmy la forest, elle et le Chevalier errant. Le chevalier estoit sus ung grant cheval, et en faisoit mener ung autre en main. Le Chevalier alloit ehantant une chanson nouvelle qu' avoit esté faite nouvellement en la maison du Roy Artus; et estoit la chanson ainsi:—

En grant jeye m' a amour mis,
 Et de grant douleur m' a esté,
 Manlgré tous mes enemys—
 Je suis si haultement monté,
 Que pour son ami m' a compté
 Celle qui passe fleur de Lys;
 Et quant pour son homme m' a pris,
 Bien ay le monde surmonté.

No. XI.—p. 223.

TRISTAN.

Tristan se couche avec Yseult sa femme. Le luminaire ardoit si cler, que Tristan pouvoit bien veoir la beauté d' Yseult; elle avoit la bouche vermeille et tendre, yeux pers rians; les sourcils bruns et bien assis, la face claire et vermeille comme une rose a l' aube du jour. Sy Tristan la baise et l' acolle; mais quant il lui souvient de Yseult de Cornouailles, sy a toute perdue la volonteé du surplus. Cette Yseult est devant lui; et l' autre est en Cornouailles qui lui defent que a l' autre Yseult ne fasse nul riens que a villeinie lui tourne. Ainsi demeure Tristan avec sa femme; et elle qui d' acoller et de baiser ne savoit riens, s' endort entre les bras de Tristan; et Tristan aussi d' autre part s' endort entre les bras d' Yseult, jusques a l'endemain que les dames et damoiselles vinrent veoir Yseult et Tristan. Tristan se lieve, puis vient au palais.

 No. XII.—p. 263.

GYRON LE COURTOIS.

Un jour que le temps estoit bel et clair, comme il pouvoit estre en la fin d' Octobre, advint que le chemin que Gyron tenoit, l' amena tout droitement au pié d' un tertre. Ce tertre estoit tout blanc de la neige; car il faisoit hyver; mais la plaine estoit toute verte, comme si ce fut au mois de May. Au pié de cette montagne, en la plaine, tout droitement dessous ung arbre, sourdoit une fontaine moult belle et moult delectable; et dessous celiuy arbre, estoit assis un Chevalier armé de harnbert et de chasses chevaleresques; et ses autres armes estoient pres de luy, et son cheval estoit attaché a l' arbre. Devant le Chevalier estoit une Damoyelle tant belle, que n' estoit merveilles que sa beaulté. Et si quelqu' un me demandoit qui estoit le Chevalier, Je dirois que c' estoit Danayn-le-Roux, le fort Chevalier; comme aussi la Damoyelle qui estoit assise devant luy, n' estoit autre que la belle Damoyelle Bloye, qui avoit tant aimé Gyron.

No. XIII.—p. 272.

PERCEFOREST.

Lors dresse l'espée pour luy couper la tete et le prent par les cheveux, et le voulut ferir : mais il luy fut advis qu' il tenoit la plus belle Damoiselle que oncques veit, par les cheveux. Lors le regarde et veoit que c' estoit Ydorus sa femme la Royne. Adonc fut tout esbahy si va dire : ha Douce amye este vous icy. Adonc luy fut advis qu' elle dist—Ouy vrayement doux amy ; ayez mercy de moi. Et le nayn qui estoit là crioit tousjours comme enragé—Gentil Roy occis le ou tu es mort. Ce ne valut pas maille ; car le Roy s' assit et embrasse Darnant et le print a accoller comme sa femme, et dist : Belle seur, pardonnez moy mon meffaict car J' este deceu. Et Darnant tira ung couteau Galoys et fiert le Roy en la poitrine ung si grant coup qu' il luy fist passer a l' autre lez, mais Dieu le ayda que ce fust au dextre coste ung peu dessoubz l' espaule. Quant le roy sentit le comp il sault sus tout effrayé, et le naya recommença a dire : Roy occis le ou tu es mort. Quant le roy se sentit navré si cruellement il s' apperceut qu' il estoit enchanté. Lors leve l' espée et coupe au chevalier la teste, et le corps s' estend, et l' ame s' en va ou elle devoit aller. Et tantost commenca en la forest une noyse et une tourmente si grant de mauvais Esperitz que c' estoit hydeur a ouyr.

No. XIV.—p. 224.

ARTUS DE LA BRETAGNE.

Et quant Artus la vit, elle luy pleut plus que quant la vit premierement : si la print par la main et s' assirent a une part entre eux deux ; et la Dame et Gouvernau furent d' autre part. Si fut la matinée belle et claire, et la resée grande ; si chantoient les Oysellets par la forest : si que les deux enfans s' en esjouissoient en grande liesse pour le doux temps, comme ceux qui estoient jeunes et a qu' il ne failloit que jouer et rir, et qui s' entre aymoient de bon cueur sans villenie et sans mal que l' un eust vers l' autre. Lors dist Artus tout en riant—Ma Damoiselle Jeannette avez vous point d' Amy ? et elle en souzriant et en regardant Artus doucement luy respondit : Par la foy que Je vous doit ouy, bel et gracieux. Et d' ou est il Jeannette ? Sire il est d' un pays dont il est—et comme est il appellé dist Artus : la fille dist, vous vous souffrirez ; mais pourtant veulx bien que maintenant sachez que le Roy Artus fut un bon chevalier et preux et de grand vertu ; et vous dis que mon amy est aussi bon, si meilleur n' est, et si ressemble a vous mieux qu' a personne qui vive, d' aller, et de venir, de corps, et de toutes les choses que nul peut ressembler a l' autre.

No. XV.—p. 368.

GALYEN RHETORÉ.

Sient que Galyen eut advisé le Père qui l'engendré, il descendit de dessus son Cheval et il ala embrasser; et moult courtoisement il osta hors de l'estoie; et le porta decoste le rocher, et le posastatre sur le bel herbe vert; puis se cacha decost lui, et moult pitieusement le regreta en disant—"Helas! père! Je voy qu'il vous convient mourir; mais venistes oncques par decost Jaqueline ma mere qui m'a long temps nourry en Constantinople ne vous verra jamais." Et Olivier lui respont—"Tu dits vrai, mon tres doux fil, mais ung jour qui passe lui avoit fait promesse de retourner, et de l'espouser; mais nous venistes decost qui men a garde; ne oncques puis ne retourneray en France, dont mon cuer est dolent.—Je la commande a Dieu, qui le Monde forma. Le Dns Regnier mon pere, et ma dame de mere, qui en ses bras me porta, ne me seur Bellande jamais ne me verra. Helas Douli! J'espe! quelle douleur aura le Roy Charlesaigne de ceste mort quand il le saura.—helas! pourquoy ne venez vous cy Charlesaigne! Et vous mon chier enfant, qui couvrent me haïez, Dieu vous ventille toujours avec sa sainte protection et garde.—Adieu mon tres gracieux et doux enfant, qui en vostre giron et sur vos genoulx me tenez.—Adieu Jaqueline ma tres douce Amye; pardonnez

moi gentil Damoyzellé car Je ne vous ay pas tenu promesse : ce s'est par les fautes desloyaux païens que Dieu m'a enlevée—Adieu vous dy plaisante Sœur Bellaude, car moult grant douleur auray de ma mort quant vous le sçurez : de vos beaux yeux vers et rians arrouverez souvent votre douce face. Tne doulce sœur plus ne me baiserez, puis qu'à la mort Je dois le corps rendre." Le vaillant Conte Olivier estoit couché sur la terre nue ou la mort angoissemment le tourmentoît, et son fils Galyen lui faisoit ombre pour la chaleur de Soleil, qui merveilleusement estoit chant, qui raïtoit sur sa face ; et Rollant estoit au pres qui moult regretoit sa mort et pitoyablement plouroit a grosses larmes. Adonc Olivier se commanda a Dieu, et la veue lui alla troubler, et lui partit l'ame du corps. A l'heure, eust en le cuer bien dar qui n'eust plouré de pitié, du deuil qui demenoit Galyen et Rollant.

No. XVI.—p. 381.

OGIER LE DANOIS.

Adonc Morgue la Fée le mena par la main au Chateau d'Avallen, là ou estoit le Roy Artus son frere, et Anheron, et Malhebrom ung Layton de Mer. Or quant Morgue approcha du dit Chateau les Fées vindrent au devant d'Ogier, chantant le plus melodieusement qu'on sçameroit jamais ouïr : si entra dedans la salle pour s'y dedaïre totalement. Adonc vist plusieurs dames Fées

sournées, et toutes couronnées de couronnes tres sump- tueusement faictes, et moult riches ; et toute jour chan- toient, dansoient et menoient vie tres joiense, sans penser a nulle quelcuouque meschante chose, fors prendre leurs mondains plaisirs. Et ainsi qu' Ogier se devoit avec- ques les dames, tantost arriva le Roy Artus auquel Mor- gue la Fae dist—" Approchez vous, Monseigneur mon Frere, et venez saluer la fleur de toute Chevalerie, l' hon- neur de toute la noblesse de France ; celui ou bonté, loyauté, et toute vertu est enclose—c' est Ogier de Dan- nemarcke, mon loyal amy, et mon seul plaisir, et auquel git toute l' esperance de ma lyesse." Adonc le roy Ar- tus vint embrasser Ogier tres amiablement et luy dit— " Ogier tres noble Chevalier vous serez le tres bien venu, et regnace-Je nostre seigneur doucement de ce qu' il m' envoie ung si notable chevalier." Puis Morgue la Fae lui mist sur son chief une couronne riche et tres preci- euse, que nul vivant ne la scauroit priser, et avecques ce elle avoit une vertu en elle merveilleuse, car tout homme qui la portoit sur son chief il oubloit tout dueil, tristesse et melenchie, né jamais luy souvenoit des pays, ne de parens qu' il eut * * * * *. Et Ogier et Morgue la Fae s' entraymerent si loyalement que ce fut merveille, non pensens a chose de monde fors d' escouter les sons de tous les instrumens dont on se puisse corder ; sonnans si doucement qu' il n' estoit si dur cuer qui n' oubliast tout dueil, tristesse et melencolie seulement pour leur prestre l' oreille ; car c' estoit ung lieu si delectable, qu' il n' estoit possible a homme de souhaiter chose qu' il ne trouvast leans. Et pensens qu' Ogier, qui tant avoit veu de chose, en estoit si esbay, qu' il ne scavoit qu' il devoit faire, ne dire, si non qu' il cuidoit mieulx estre en Para- dis que a nulle autre region.

ERRATA.

VOLUME I.

- P. 31, l. 25, *for 2, read 12.*
— 51, l. 26, *for arrives, read arrived.*
— 85, l. 13, *for narrates, read relates.*
— 125, l. 11, *for seems, read seem.*
— 145, l. 25, *for knight-errants, read knights errant.*
— 179, l. 11, *for figure, read figures.*

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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